

*Griffen*

# Community History

Compiled by  
**ANGUS RIDGE  
WOMEN'S  
INSTITUTE**



Margery J. Griffin

8804 - 143 st

Edmonton, Alta.

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# Community History

Compiled by

*The Angus Ridge  
Women's Institute*

**ORGANIZED MAY 27, 1917**

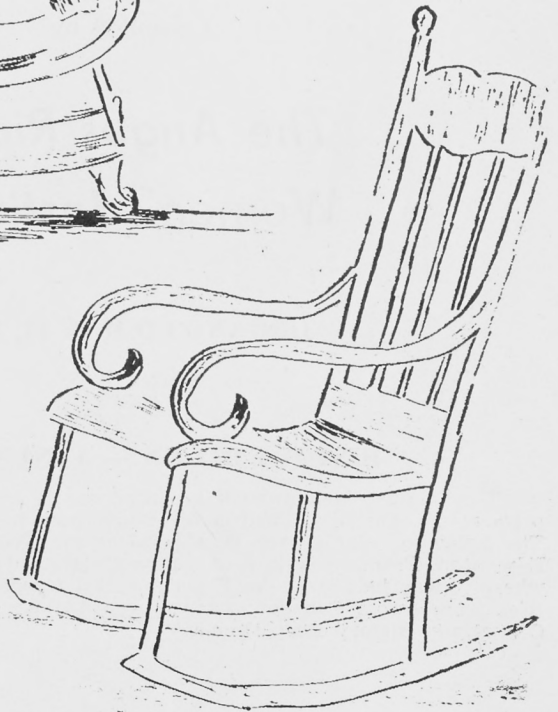
**HISTORY BEGUN — JANUARY, 1958**

The original history book prepared by the Angus Ridge W.I. won first prize at the District Constituency Conference held at Wetaskiwin in 1959. The following year it won first prize at the Provincial W.I. Convention in Edmonton. From there it was sent to Charlottetown, Prince Edward Island, where it was judged at the Federated W.I. Convention, competing with entries from across Canada, and was awarded first place in the Tweedsmuir Community History competitions.



## *Dedication*

To the early pioneers who faced great hardships with courage and cheerfulness, we respectfully dedicate this volume. In this way, we hope in some small measure to pay the debt we of today owe these brave men and women who blazed the trail for us. May the memories of those olden days of self-denial and strong faith long be cherished by our children and teach them the true values of life and may it give them a greater appreciation of the blessings they now enjoy.





						Philip Nelson	Melvin Gustav Ballhorn	Sven Carl R. Eklund	Harry Eliason	Mrs L. J. F. Wingolade	Harold Blanch
33	34	35	36	37	38	Frank Ballhorn	Mrs E. Larson Ballhorn	Gustav Leslie Opedt	Ralph Victor Swanson	C. L. Harold Pearson	Wm. Schreiffles
						Frank Ballhorn	Frank E. Ballhorn	Ethel Larson	Milton Norman Doupe	Emil Emil Peterson	
28	27	26	25	24	23	Louis Buchner	Laura Roland Krutzfeldt	W. E. Milton Doupe	Milton Doupe	Leslie Leslie Shantz	
						Carl O. Johnson	Mrs. David Roy Ballhorn	Mrs L. Roland Krutzfeldt	T. J. Rose Cherrington	Bruce Mrs. Dan Switzer	Mrs G. Mrs G. Shantz
21	20	19	18	17	16	Edmund L. Walter Kasur	Raymond Arthur Krutzfeldt	Roy Arthur Ballhorn	T. J. Carl Cherrington	Mrs C. Don Switzer	Bus Schatchneider
						Hannah E. Vossberg	Raymond W. J. Krutzfeldt	Roy Arthur Ballhorn	Estate Harold Allen	Percy Leonard Bland	Bus Schatchneider
15	14	13	12	11	10	Elof C. A. E. Rotvik	Eric Ralph Angus Zone Cleland	W. J. Adolf Wilson	Bert C. Wm J. McRae	Mrs H. F. May Hay	Ed Krause
						Estate Julius Schmulland	Stanley Thins K. A. J. Rix	E. W. Florence Wilson	Kenneth Nellie Nelles	Alvin Joe Nelles	Joe Nelles
9	8	7	6	5	4	M. S. Bolt	Stanley A. J. Thins K. Rix	Geo. Alex Watson	Florence Wilfred White	J. R. Schantz	Homer Arthur Schantz
						Carl Arthur Erieson	E. W. L. Girling	Ralph Alex Angus	Charles Ed Dowsell	Arthur J. R. W. Bolton	W. Lily Bolton
4	3	2	1			Carl Arthur Ericson	E. A. Mons Reynolds	Mons T. A. Dyberg	W. L. Omer Bailey	E. B. Omer Dowsell	Norman Latimer
						LEGEND	INDIAN RESERVE				
33	34	35	36	37	38	Battle River	Roads & Bridges				
						1952 LAND OWNERS					
28	27	26	25	24	23						

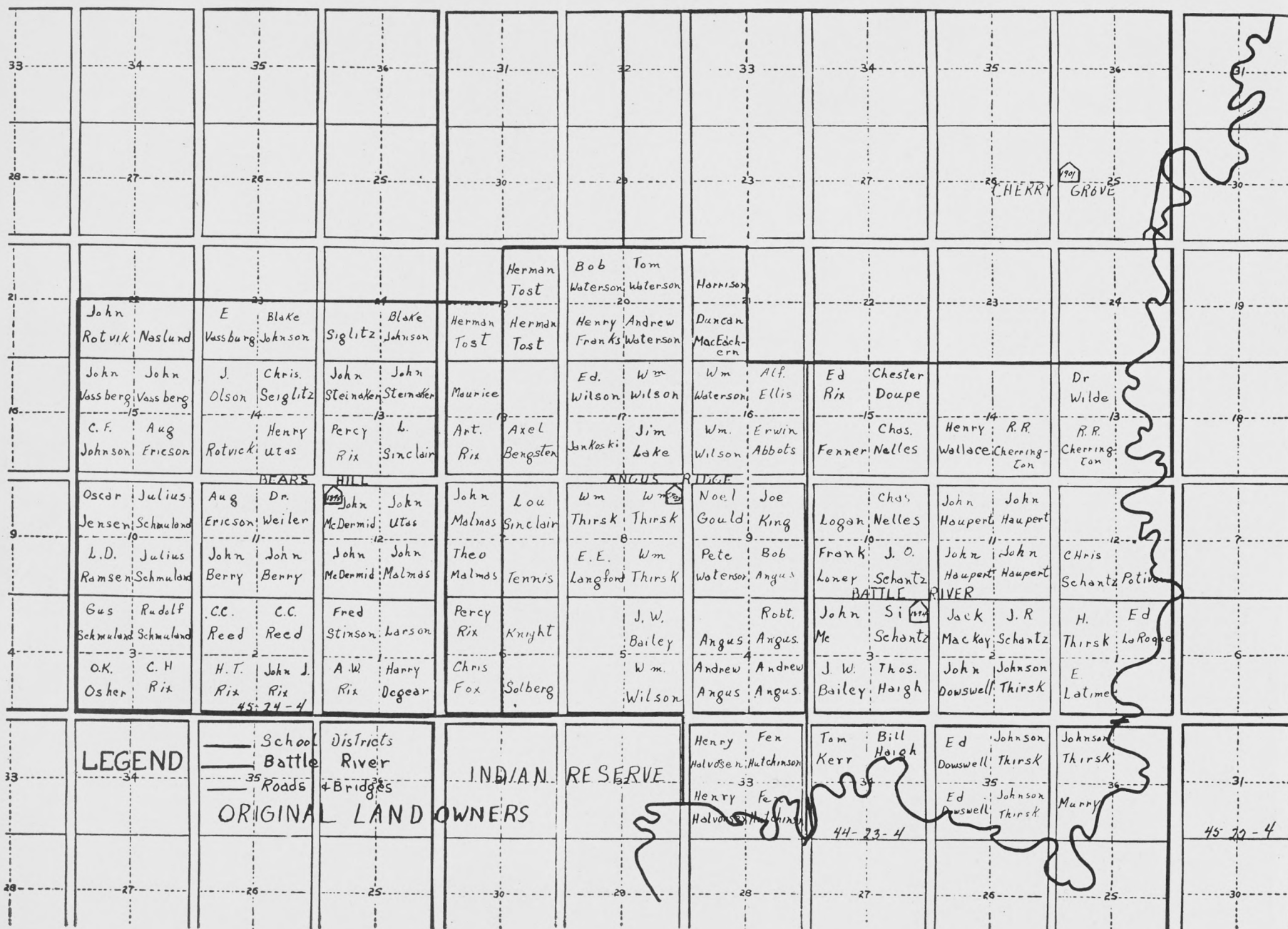




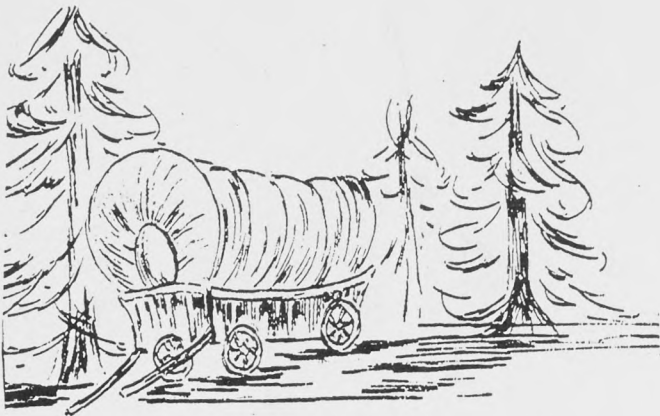


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## Preface

When we first decided to enter this Lady Tweedsmuir History Competition, we certainly did not realize what is involved and what difficulties we would encounter. No doubt if one of us would have put in full time for a year or so, a much larger book with many more stories, would have resulted. However, it seems that in our present busy world, there are many activities to keep us occupied, so we had only so much time to give to this project.

We also found that we were almost too late in collecting data and histories of our pioneers. There are only two or three people living in each district, who can tell us anything interesting that happened before 1900. At times the stories have been somewhat conflicting and confusing. Many of the old school registers have been lost or destroyed and it seems that, even from our Municipality, it was difficult to obtain much helpful information before 1918, when at that time the Municipality of Montgomery came into being. Many of the stories you will read are first hand from 'those who remember'. Therefore if there are mistakes in the historical items mentioned in this book, we of the Angus Ridge Women's Institute, hope they are only minor mistakes.

There have been times when the committee in charge have felt discouraged and almost lost heart. Then some fine, understanding person would tell us what a wonderful thing we were doing, to give of our time, to resurrect the past, so that the memory of our pioneers might be kept fresh and clear before us.

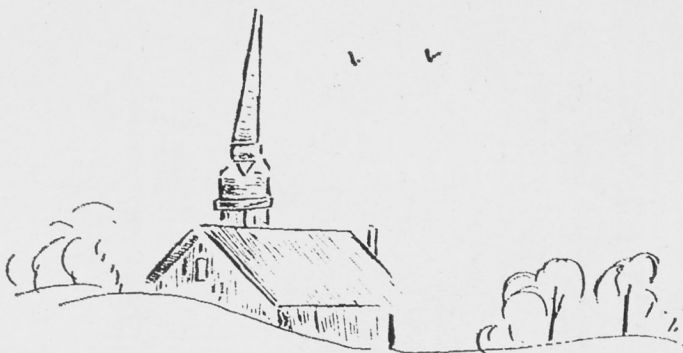
As our membership in the Angus Ridge Women's Institute extends to the four districts—Angus Ridge, Battle River, Bears Hill and Cherry Grove—we have endeavored to relate the history, as much as possible, to each one of these districts and of the people who have lived there, bringing the information up to the present time. Names of some families may have been omitted but it has seemed almost impossible to obtain the necessary information concerning them.

We extend special thanks to Mr. Godfrey Baker, Clerk of the County of Wetaskiwin, for his assistance in compiling some of the district maps; to Mr. Otto Nieman, who has so willingly produced pictures for us and gave us valuable information; and to those who gave us encouragement, without which, we could not have carried on.

History Committee:

Dora Ballhorn  
Freda Nelles

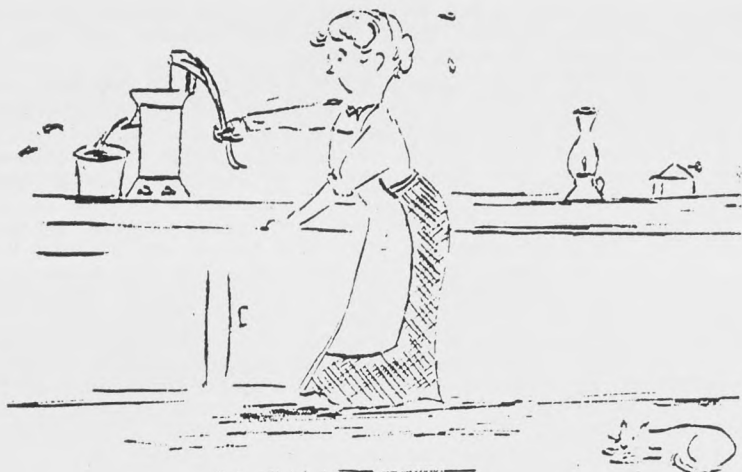




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## *History of the Angus Ridge Women's Institute*

In the spring of 1917 several ladies in the Angus Ridge district talked of forming a branch of the Alberta Women's Institute. So it was that on May 29th they met at the home of Mrs. George Waterston, with Mrs. H. J. Montgomery, Constituency Convener, present to call the meeting to order. At this meeting a slate of officers was elected with Mrs. J. G. Anderson, wife of a resident minister, as President. Mrs. Wm. Wilson was elected first vice-president, Mrs. T. A. Angus second vice-president, Miss Jessie Waterston, secretary-treasurer, and three directors, namely: Miss Gladys Bailey, Miss Gertrude Thirsk and Miss Edith Waterston. It was agreed to call this branch the Angus Ridge Women's Institute, and that they should meet on the second Thursday of each month at two o'clock in the afternoon.

Miss Isabel Noble was President of the Alberta Women's Institutes at the time. The dues were twenty-five cents per member per year.

By the end of the year there were 24 members enrolled, and the group had been busily engaged in Red Cross work, as World War I, was still in progress. At each meeting, however, the program committee had something of interest of an informative nature as well as singing and readings.

This branch kept in close contact with the Provincial organization by sending delegates to all conventions and by occasionally having the Convener and the Provincial President come to speak at the meetings.

A three-day sewing course was held in 1919 which benefitted many of the mothers as they all did a great deal of sewing for all members of the family in those days.

The raising of money was a constant problem, but these energetic ladies always managed by putting in a little out of their own purses or by putting on basket-socials, dances or lunches. Before the Angus Ridge Hall was built, the public gatherings were held in the Angus Ridge School House. On several occasions the W.I. bought needed articles and presented them to the school board for the use of teachers and pupils.

During these early years the women were very active about keeping up with progress on everything which might concern them or their families. The members studied and gave papers on every conceivable subject. In 1920 they agreed to pay expenses for one member, Mrs. E. Wilson, to take a course in dressmaking, then she, in turn, would instruct the other members on the course she had taken. Demonstrations or short courses lasting up to several days were held nearly every summer for many years.

On October 14, 1920 the Wetaskiwin W.I. were guests of the Angus

Ridge W.I. at the home of Mrs. R. Cleland, for a joint meeting with 15 members and 20 visitors present. Ladies from both branches took part in an entertaining program following the meeting.

Up to this time the question of a rest room in town had been brought up several times by outside interests, but it had not seemed too necessary and the W.I. had let the matter drop.

A Certificate of Incorporation of the Angus Ridge W.I. was received, dated September 30, 1921, and signed by the Honorable George Hoadley, Minister of Agriculture.

An essay contest among four school districts was sponsored by the W.I. in 1922. The title of the essay was to be "The Advantages of Living in Canada," and the prize money to be \$3.00, \$2.00 and \$1.00. The winners names in this contest are not available.

During the early years of the Alberta Women's Institutes the Government had been giving them a yearly grant, but in 1923 they wished to discontinue the practice. This action was explained to the Angus Ridge members by the Constituency Convener, Mrs. H. J. Montgomery, who stated that the Government wished the W.I. to give up the grant voluntarily. So our members agreed to make no complaint.

A booth was set up and decorated at the Wetaskiwin Fair in 1923 by the Angus Ridge W.I. in which they displayed their handicraft, mending, canning, vegetables, flowers and etc.

During these years in the '20s, regular meetings were held with members preparing papers on many varied subjects, speakers were in attendance occasionally, debates were held among the members, all conventions and conferences were attended by at least one or two delegates, demonstrations were held and members took a course in basketry. Many of the articles woven are still in use. Music, singing and readings were part of all the meetings.

In 1926 the Angus Ridge Community Hall Association sold shares and built a hall with the proceeds. The Angus Ridge W.I. bought one share and helped in many ways to furnish the hall. The wine-colored velour drapes on the stag were bought and made by members and are still in use.

That same year in July, nine members and the husbands of seven of them, paid a visit to the Experimental Station at Lacombe, and enjoyed the day touring the whole place and enjoying a picnic lunch.

The Wetaskiwin Constituency Conference was held in the brand new hall in November of 1926. This turned out to be a great success. The hostess members served a chicken dinner to all who attended.

The new Community Hall was used again in April 1927 when the W.I. put on a play which was termed quite a hit by the large audience in attendance.

In the fall of that same year the W.I. brought into the district an expert on chickens. He culled quite a number of flocks in the neighborhood.

The W.I. sponsored a baby clinic at the hall in that same year also, and it was well attended.

It was not until 1928 that the Angus Ridge W.I. decided to have conveners for all standing committees. The practice has continued all through the years.

In June of 1928 a millinery demonstration was held at the hall. Many new bonnets were made, but not so many of them were worn, and none of the ladies decided on millinery as a career.

Another essay contest had been sponsored, and prizes of \$2.00 each went to Willie Buskas, Grade VI and Dagmar Nelson, Grade VIII.

Later in that year the members met to devote one whole day to sewing for a needy family. So often throughout the years the W.I. have helped needy families or those who suffered loss through fire.

Making drawings of model kitchens was another project undertaken in 1929. These drawings were displayed and judged. In this contest, Mrs. G. Buchnell's plan was given first prize.

The members like to keep in contact with all former members who left the district, and all through the years they made a point of corresponding with their former colleagues, usually taking turns at writing. In later years

time seemed to become more pressing and this practice was not kept up so stringently.

1929 saw the ladies busily engaged in the art of basketry again. This was a three-day course and a total of 23 articles were made. About this time they had a dance at the Community Hall to replenish the treasury, but only \$13.50 was realized. In September, another Constituency Conference was held at the hall.

Often the entertainment at the meetings was provided by the teachers and by the children of the members. Besides being enjoyable, this was good training for the youngsters.



**A meeting of the W.I. at the home of Mrs. Otto Nieman in 1930**

These ladies were bound to learn how to weave baskets because they took another course in 1930. That year, also, they amalgamated with the Malmo U.F.A. and U.F.W.A. to put on a basket social and concert at Angus Ridge as a means of raising money. The July meeting that year was held at the hall and all ladies of the district were invited to attend. Mrs. Latimer, the first white woman in the district, who arrived in 1891, was guest speaker of the afternoon. Her talk dealt with the early history of the community and was much enjoyed by all present.

A clinic for school children was held in 1931. This took in the children of four districts, Rose Brier, Battle Lake, Battle River and Angus Ridge, at a cost of five dollars to each district. The ladies at this time still continued their fine papers on Education, Legislation, Health, Foods and Nutrition, Child Welfare, Agriculture, etc.

1932 saw the Women's Institute busily engaged in helping needy families and in taking a two-day short course on Interior Decorating. A display of art, fancy work, and canning was put on at the hall in this same year. This was a province-wide project which was judged to determine which municipality could offer the best selection. Later in the year the W.I. were guests of the Malmo UFWA at a lecture and demonstration on "First Aid".

The Angus Ridge W.I. invited the Malmo UFWA to put on an evening of entertainment at the Community Hall, the proceeds of which were to be evenly divided. This was quite a successful evening. The February meeting of that year was held in the evening at the home of Mrs. Levi Evans, when the ladies entertained their husbands.

A "Menu" contest held in the Constituency in 1934 resulted in Mrs. A. B. Ekroth winning first and Mrs. C. Bucknell taking third prize. At the Constituency Conference that year, Angus Ridge W.I. won first with their handicraft exhibits. A Household Economic Correspondence course had been taken by the members, three of whom received diplomas. They were Mrs. Norman Doupe, Mrs. A. J. Rix and Mrs. Harry Grant. A certificate of merit was also sent to the Angus Ridge W.I.

For several years this branch donated milk for cocoa for the children at the School Fairs. At this time, also, "Mothers Bundles" for needy mothers



**Ready for a pleasant canter**

were made up and sent to many with new babies. Requests for help from needy families were often received. Many of these requests were referred to the Welfare League in Wetaskiwin.

During the depression in the 1930's the Angus Ridge W.I. carried on with regular meetings at which lively discussions were held on timely topics; papers of great interest were prepared and presented by standing committee conveners; contests were held; and music, vocal solos, duets, group singing and readings were presented. Delegates and others attended conventions and conferences, and the members continued with exhibits and displays of handicraft and canning.

A display of a hooked rug by Mrs. T. Angus, a quilt of an original design by Miss Gwendolene Cleland, and crocheting by Mrs. Gordon Thirsk was sent to an exhibition in Scotland in 1938. These had each won a first prize at the Convention in Edmonton.

Late in 1939 the W.I. again took a correspondence course, this time in the art of rug-making. That year Mrs. T. Angus won first on a hooked rug at the Edmonton Exhibition.

In 1940 the women were once more busily engaged in Red Cross work, knitting, sewing and making quilts. Ditty bags were made up and sent overseas quite regularly. Occasionally members read notes of appreciation from the boys who had received these useful articles. The Red Cross sent out urgent calls (all the time) for materials with which to make quilts (such as old woolen caps) as well as for finished quilts, and for help in knitting and sewing.

A trip to Edmonton, a picnic lunch, and tours of many points of interest was a highlight of 1941. One of these tours was to a packing plant, where animals were being graded, and tests for tuberculosis taken. Angus Ridge took first prize with the handicraft exhibition at the W.I. Convention in Edmonton again that year.

July 30, 1942, saw all the members and their husbands sit down to a chicken supper at the Angus Ridge Community Hall, with a program following. Perhaps this was to compensate the husbands for all the time spent by the wives in doing Red Cross work.

A decision was made the next month that members would donate pennies to the "Penny Bank" at each meeting to help pay expenses. This practice is still followed. It was also decided that not more than three kinds of food with tea or coffee be served at meetings. This rule is still supposed to be followed, but it is occasionally broken.

In 1945 Angus Ridge won first again with the handicraft Exhibit at the W.I. Convention in Edmonton, but no one was able to take advantage of the



scholarship awarded which allowed one member to attend a summer course at the Banff School of Fine Arts. The scholarship went to Vegreville, the second prize winner that year, and Mrs. G. Thirsk went the following year and took a course in weaving.

All during these years the work went on, making quilts, knitting and sewing for the Red Cross, filling Ditty bags, and raising money to make donations to the Salvation Army, the Navy League, the W.I. War Fund and to the "Jam Fund", and the members themselves bought many dollars worth of War Savings Stamps. Sometimes the articles donated and made for the Red Cross amounted to 150 articles a year. Many quilts were included in this. Later, "Housewives" or "Hussifs" were made and sent away to be given to women in war-torn Europe. These contained needles, thread, pins, buttons, scissors, and other little household necessities.

When Mr. N. Krueger held an auction sale in 1946, the members sold lunch and from this realized about ninety dollars. This was the largest amount they had realized from any one effort and it enabled them to make donations to some of the worthy organizations that were begging for help. Layettes for babies were in great demand at this time, also.

The question of a rest-room in Wetaskiwin was in the fore again. This time, in 1947, the City Council offered room in the City Hall. A committee to represent Angus Ridge W.I. was appointed to study the situation.

Two more auction sales in 1948 boosted the amount in the treasury by \$91.84. A nutrition course started the previous year was completed. Miss Edith Armstrong, Home Economist from Camrose spent an afternoon teaching the members "Shellcraft." Many beautiful pictures done in shells were the result of this demonstration. At this time, also, many displaced people were arriving in the country and pleas were out for everyone to donate clothing for them. The W.I. members came forward as usual with large bundles.

In 1949 the first of many annual bazaars and teas was held in the Angus Ridge Community Hall. These became the main money making ventures. This year saw the completion of the restroom in the City Hall. It was furnished by the Wetaskiwin Constituency of the AWI. A loom for weaving had been under discussion for some time and in 1949 it was decided to buy one.

Since 1949 money for special prizes for Junior Sections at the Wetaskiwin Agricultural Fair has been donated by the Angus Ridge W.I. each year.

A course in Interior Decorating began in January, 1950. The loom was set up and weaving began under instruction by Mrs. A. B. Eckroth who had



**When chickens were hatched on the farm**



**Angus Ridge W.I. members on a tour of Edmonton  
visiting places of interest in 1941**

used a loom since a young girl in Sweden. That year the first float ever built by the W.I. was put in the parade at the Wetaskiwin Fair and won first prize. One member, Mrs. G. Ballhorn, was sent to Edmonton to attend a four day school, put on by the Blue Cross, to give all available information on Cancer. Later a film on cancer was shown to the public in the Moose Hall in Wetaskiwin, sponsored by the Angus Ridge W.I.

In 1951 a "Cancer Drive" throughout the district resulted in the members collecting \$222.85 for that worthy cause. Another drive for funds was held by the members to assist the district to install electricity in the Angus Ridge Community Hall. A total of \$296.00 was received from this canvas, and the W.I. added \$27.00 to that amount from the treasury. In August the ladies served a supper to the Kiwanis Club of Wetaskiwin and their wives, the members had their own husbands there as guests.

At this time the Angus Ridge W.I. began a yearly donation of \$50.00, or something of that value, to the Bethany Home for Children. This home is doing wonderful work in caring for children who come mostly from broken homes.

For two years, 1950 and 1951, \$60.00 per year was given to the Wetaskiwin Community Council. From this Council our present Recreation Commission evolved which has done such splendid work in taking care of supervised recreation and sports, especially among the children and younger people of Wetaskiwin.

A demonstration of hair styling by Mr. Hornick of Edmonton was given in 1952. He brought with him his own models, and explained many things to be observed when re-styling the hair. That year \$10.00 was donated to a Memorial Fund in honor of Mrs. H. J. Montgomery. This money was to be used to purchase library books. Another supper was served to the Kiwanis Club. The wives of the Kiwanians and the husbands of the W.I. members were guests at the supper.

In 1953 Angus Ridge won the Constituency Rose Bowl for the third time with their Handicraft Exhibit. This entitled them to keep it among



**Cutting oats in 1905**

their members. An extra \$50.00 was donated to the Bethany Home for the "Linoleum Fund." A wagon was given to David Tost so that the other children of the family could pull him about the yard, as he had become too crippled to walk.

Mrs. Hudson Grant was presented with a Life Membership in the AWI in 1954 — the first in the Angus Ridge branch. A Certificate and a pin go with this presentation. She had been a very active member since joining by telephone in 1917. In December of that year the first of a number of Community Christmas concerts was put on by the W.I. at the Angus Ridge Hall. A very large crowd filled the hall and 75 bags of treats were handed out to the children. The number of bags given out now has increased to about 125. Lunch was served following the program.

Alberta celebrated its Golden Jubilee in 1955 and to commemorate this event the AWI held a contest at its convention for the best quilt of an original design. Mrs. R. Angus created a design and a quilt was made and shown by the members. It brought home third prize and was later raffled off — the lucky ticket holder being Ralph Bailey. A Bingo party at the hall in 1955 netted \$67.67 for the Cancer Drive. In that year also three more ladies who had been members for 35 years or more, were awarded Life Memberships in the AWI, namely: Mrs. Manfred Grant, Mrs. Ralph Cleland and Mrs. Otto Nieman. In the following year Mrs. Ed Wilson also received a Life Membership. Another trip to the Lacombe Experimental Farm, a picnic lunch, tour of the farm and a flower show, was enjoyed by quite a few members.

Another Bingo party at the hall in 1956 brought in \$67.30 which was divided between the Cancer Fund and the Rheumatism and Arthritic Society. \$25.00 that year was donated towards the building of the Kinsmen Swimming Pool in Wetaskiwin. Two members, Mrs. A. B. Ekroth and Miss Agnes Bailey took a weaving course at the Banff School of Fine Arts during the summer. The W.I. bought eight dozen cups and saucers for their own use, and eight dozen stainless steel spoons for the hall.

A quilt of Mrs. M. Grant's which had been worked on by quite a number of the members won second prize in the Salada Tea Contest at the W.I. Convention in Edmonton in 1957. The Pipestone Garden Club with their leader, Mrs. Henry Moonen visited at a meeting and put on a display of their work which was very interesting. In that year also the Angus Ridge W.I. and the Wetaskiwin Co-op Guild entertained the other branches in the Constituency at the Co-op Hall, when they heard a talk by Mrs. T. H. Howes, Provincial President of the A.W.I. on her trip to the Associated Country Women of the World Convention in Ceylon and her continued trip around the world. Tea was served following the meeting in the Co-op Hall.

In 1958 a Community History was started to be entered in the Tweedsmuir Contest. This won first prize at the Constituency Conference. Bobby Merner addressed the members at a meeting that year, giving a very good talk on his trip to the Boy Scout World Jamboree in England, and of a further trip through some of the European countries.

On a very hot Sunday in July the members, their husbands and children held a most enjoyable picnic in the shade of the trees, on land owned by Mr. Frank Ballhorn.

On an afternoon in September of that same year the W.I. entertained about 60 members of the Wetaskiwin Friendship Club at the Angus Ridge Hall. Later in the fall lunch was served to a busload of touring Saskatchewan farmers when they visited the Simonson farm. A picture of some of the members as they worked was later seen on T.V. A donation of \$100.00 was made to the Constituency "Old Folks Home Fund."

During the last 10 years the Angus Ridge W.I. have made regular donations to many worthy causes and organizations, among them the Salvation Army, The Woods' Christian Home, The Bethany Home for Children, The Crippled Children's Fund, CNIB, Bread for Greece, Soap for Greece, Barley for Korea, Flood Relief for Winnipeg, Red Cross, Cancer Fund, Canadian Rheumatic and Arthritic Society, UNESCO, Local Fire Funds, Rest Room as well as the AWI, FWIC and Travel Funds. Dr. Lotta Hitchmanova, a Czechoslovakian by birth, who heads the Unitarian Services Committee of Canada, and who has devoted herself so strenuously to the work of rehabilitation in so many lands where suffering and need are prevalent, still sends

out pleas, especially to W.I. groups, for money, for milk and food, and for diapers, soap, layettes, towels, used clothing, and even sewing machines and kitchen equipment. Through the post-war years the Angus Ridge W.I. has filled or partially filled a great many of these requests.

During the past year a great deal of used clothing has been sent to the "Apparel Shop" at the Provincial Mental Hospital at Ponoka.

A flower and sick committee have taken care of the invalid members and bereaved members throughout the years, and a visiting committee is presently paying calls on the shut-in members, especially Mrs. R. Cleland, who has been unable to attend meetings for the past three years.

One standing plea through the years has been for everyone to put their names on their gate posts. Most of the members have complied with this request.

There is nearly a 100% subscription to the "Home and Country" and the "Federated News" also is enjoyed.

The Annual Bazaar is looked forward to by many who enjoy a spring



W.I. members and their families gather for a picnic in 1948

drive and tea at the Angus Ridge Hall. Some enjoy the display of handcraft, others like the sewing and novelty table, others take their pick of the forty to fifty well made aprons. There are those with a sweet tooth who want home-made candy to take to husband and children, while the "green thumb" people buy from the large assortments of plants of all kinds. The City women are especially fond of the long table piled high with all sorts of home baking, a large part of which is bread and buns. A few men even attend these bazaars.

Very little has been said about the lunches at the meetings, but these are perhaps the highlights of many of the meetings, for all the members have been exceptionally good cooks, and after a strenuous business session the ladies enjoy a good repast with lots of conversation. (A house full of women all talking at lunch can make quite a din.)

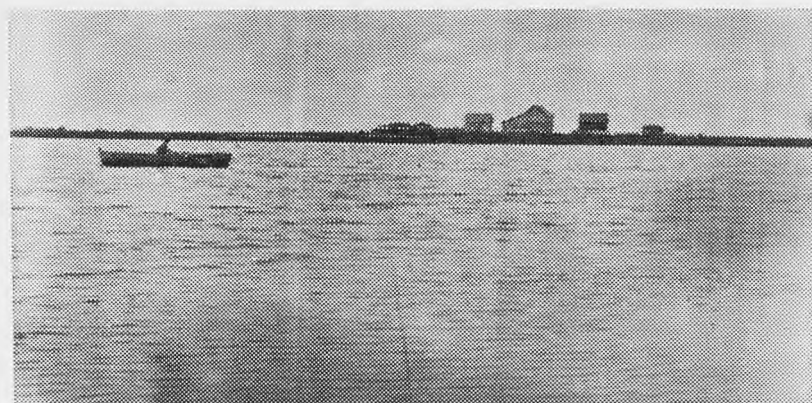
The children, too, should not be forgotten. Many of them have been raised from birth in the atmosphere of the Women's Institute, because in many cases the mothers have been forced to take them along if they wished to attend themselves. Right now we have one little four-year old who talks about her "History" being done. (We wish ours were!)

Angus Ridge has helped to do a share of the work beyond the branch, also. Four Constituency Conveners have served terms of office, namely: Mrs. Manfred Grant, Mrs. Austin Rix, Mrs. Roy Ballhorn and Mrs. Norman Doupe. Also Miss Agnes Bailey is just completing a four-year term as Provincial Handicraft convener, and by the time this is read she will be Mrs. Joe Bentley.

At the time of writing this History for the Tweedsmuir Contest, the members are busily engaged in making quilt blocks to be entered in another Tweedsmuir Contest, "Grandmother's Quilt Blocks", as well as blocks for a quilt for the Red Cross, and the annual bazaar in May is not far off, so it seems that the women never for one moment stop working for

"HOME AND COUNTRY"





Accept and make use of what comes was the philosophy of the pioneer. The same piece of land, known as Nieman's slough, is shown above during a wet season in 1906 when a boat was useful. In the winter, centre, a skating party enjoys the expanse of ice. Below is a bountiful crop grown during a dry year.



# The Indians



The Hobbema Indian Reservation lies almost directly South of the Bears Hill and Angus Ridge districts and extends away to the west. Some seventy thousand acres are in the Reserve and about 30 sections of the land have been cleared and are now under cultivation. It is said that some of the best land in the province is to be found here. Most of the soil is a rich, black loam; some patches of clay and sand around Pigeon Lake, where the reserve ends.

Four tribes find their headquarters at Hobbema. The Samson has the largest population of 1150; the Montana 145; Ermineskin 567 and Louie Bull 264. The Samson and Montana bands reside mostly east of the No. 2 Highway which runs north and south through the reserve.

I asked one of the older Indians what the word "Hobbema" meant. He said that the word implies Art or Artist in Cree. He also said that the reservation had been in use, by the Indians, for nearly 90 years.

Eighty per cent of the Indians are Roman Catholic and the remainder Protestant. The United Church and the Baptist have churches on this reserve as well as Roman Catholics.

The Catholic school has an enrollment of 500 day and residential pupils. Three Protestant schools are located in different localities and have an attendance of 25 to 45 pupils each. Several families send their children to attend schools near Edmonton. Also, on the reserve is a 28-bed hospital where free hospitalization is given the Indians by an efficient staff. The hospital also houses six cribs.

Their treaty money amounts to five dollars to each man, woman and child per year. Several years ago, rich oil wells were discovered on the reserve and it has brought in such a revenue for the Indians that their very own way of life has changed. There is something like 46 producing oil wells, on the land, located mostly in the Pigeon Lake Area. The money from the wells is divided on a per capita basis. In 1958 it amounted to something like sixteen dollars per month, per person.

From 60 to 70 new homes are built each year from Indian band funds—a far cry from the wigwams, teepees and shacks, in which they once lived. Today, their main way of getting anywhere is in a car they own themselves. Occasionally, however, one may see a wagon, drawn by a pony team, with the driver and his wife and papoose occupying the front seat and more squaws and children sitting in the back. Perhaps a colt or two will be running along side and at least several dogs bringing up the rear or scouting on ahead.

The Indians have become users of modern day machinery and grow grain and hay for sale, raise livestock and each year hold a large sale of their own feeder cattle. There is no herd law on the reserve, so that livestock can roam at will, without any restrictions. However, most of the land is fenced, especially near the highways, but on various occasions, animals have been killed by trains or trucks. In recent years the Indians have become fairly good farmers, under the supervision of the Farm Instructor. They put up a great deal of wild hay, which they sell to farmers in the district. They also cut many hundreds of willow posts and rails, which are

## *Chief of the Ermineskins*



### SYMBOL OF PAST GRANDEUR

Taking a bow for his ancestors, proudest of all pioneers of this great province, who roamed the forest lands and the plains before the White Man came, is Chief Dan Minde of the Ermineskin band.

—Photo by Len's Studio

—Times Files

piled at Hobbema and sold there. The Indians, too, have been very good at helping the farmers around the district, especially during the harvest season, when often they would move their entire families to the farm where they were working. Then the men and women would work together, at the stooking or whatever the task would be.

The Indians have a government of their own. A Chief and Councillors are elected. The number of Councillors depends on the size of the band. Each band has their own governing group which meets at the beginning of each year to discuss and settle their various problems.

In the early years the settlers believed in the Indian's weather forecasts. They seemed to know if the season would be wet or dry or if there would be a severe winter or a cool summer. They seemed very seldom to fail in their predictions. They evidently studied the signs of nature and went by that.

Many regions on the reserve are veritable Blueberry patches and the squaws and in fact entire families, from the children to the old grandmothers pick the delicious fruit. They are generally ripe in August and September and where the patches are good, the ground is blue. The Indians sell the fruit at a very good price.

As we lived not too far from the reserve we got to know some of the families fairly well. Sometimes on New Year's morning some of them would come in to greet us and wish us well. They seemed very pleased with the tea and cake my mother gave them.

We were privileged to attend an Indian wedding which took place in the Protestant church on the reserve. After the ceremony the bridal party drove in a democrat, drawn by two grey horses, over a winding road to the groom's home. Young people had driven ahead and strewn wild flowers along the way. Before the young couple got out of the vehicle, the crowd that had gathered, made a rush for one of the many bright ribbons, which had been tied to the horses manes and harness. It meant good luck for those who got a ribbon. We sat down to tables laid with white cloths and the food was plentiful and good. There were several speeches and several hymns and songs in Cree. All told, it was not very different to our own ceremony and celebrations. The bride had made her own white gown and wore a veil and carried wild flowers. We felt honored to be among the guests. The saying is that once you are an Indian's friend, you remain that always.

Several Indians have been chosen to act in the movies. Quite a number were in "Saskatchewan" which was done in Banff and surrounding country. Several years ago, two braves from Hobbema, Joe D. Buffalo and Joe Applegarth, were sent to Spain to do another picture, "The Sheriff of Fractured Jaw." Applegarth, the younger of the two, has played rugged types in pictures before. He has appeared in "Saskatchewan," "Battle Cry" and "Drum Beat." He runs a farm near Hobbema. Joe D. Buffalo, a heavy set quiet man, who had never been outside of his native Alberta, also farms on the reserve. When asked how he got into the movies, he replied, "A fellow just asked me, so I said I'd go."

Several Indians have become artists and have painted some good pictures. Alex Twins, a young chap, has turned out some excellent work as well as Dan Buffalo who did several pictures for a local man in Wetaskiwin.

Now, to go back in history, our first definite record concerning the Indians in the Battle River country, comes in the 1730's. The Snake Indians, as they were then called, were in control of this area. But another tribe, the Blackfeet, after being successful in obtaining guns and ammunition from the traders, were, in a short time in possession of the territory and remained so for many years. They were content to kill the Buffalo for food and clothing and implements. The Buffalo roamed by the thousands through the Battle River area and south on to the prairies, so that a hunter did not have to venture far to kill a plentiful supply of meat.

In the early years of the 1800's the Blackfeet began their slow exodus from the parklands of Alberta, preferring the open prairies to the south. By 1830 they had abandoned the area to the Crees. This tribe had learned the value of trapping beaver, which were so numerous in the streams which flowed into the Battle River.

Of the four chiefs who settled at the Hobbema Agency after the treaty of 1877, two of them, Bobtail and Ermineskin were brothers, while Muddy



**Indian Pow-Wow held on main street in Wetaskiwin around 1900**

Bull was a close relative. The fourth chief, Samson had a separate band.

During the summer of 1870, the great Small Pox epidemic struck. The bands were hopelessly struck down when the disease entered their camps. Those who could, fled to the Bears Hills, west of Hobbema. Here the Elk and Deer were in plentiful supply for food, for the disease-ravaged bands.

On September 25, 1877, a treaty was signed and in the Council, Bobtail asked for and received a reserve, extending from the ridge of Bears Hill south east to the Battle River. When the survey was made, Bobtail asked for his band to be settled near the Leavings of the Battle River, where he and his son Coyote, had built a house. Samson and Ermineskin were given reserves in the Bears Hill and on the flats to the east, while Muddy Bull settled his band at Pigeon Lake.

The senseless slaughtering of their ready supply of meat, the Buffalo; the epidemics of Small Pox, measles, influenza and other diseases, along with the severe winters, caused a situation so bad that a priest was induced to write a plea to the Minister of the Interior in Ottawa, begging for assistance. The petition was written in January 1883. However, their plight improved in the spring of 1883 and later in the year, the reserves were officially surveyed and the Crees under the able guidance of Sam B. Lucas, farm instructor, began to till the land and to plant gardens. Mr. Lucas had been working with the Indians for several years before.

A report from an Inspector of Indian Agencies date Dec. 9, 1882 had the following information which I have condensed as follows: "Mr. Lucas, commenced early upon the farm, in giving employment to all Indians presenting themselves for assistance, paying them for their work in provisions, ammunition and occasionally a little clothing. They had some land broken and had put up some hay. There were 15 or 20 Indians men and women employed. They turned out promptly to work at 6:30 when a horn was blown. They came in at noon, going out to the fields again at 1:30 and came home at sun down. He established an Indian Mess, the meals being prepared by an



Indian Squaw. Any who would not work, were not allowed to stay on the farm" The report goes on to say that at that early time, one dwelling house had been erected, a couple of other smaller houses, stables, corrals, root houses and cattle sheds. A quantity of cord and stove wood had been chopped and piled. The farm was being fenced and some draining and ditching was done. There were on the farm, at that time, according to the report, Indians who could plow, sow and cradle, equal to any white man. Several of the Indians had already gone into their different reserves to farm on their own account. The report spoke of a splendid vegetable garden in which there was a profusion of everything.

In 1884 Sam B. Lucas was promoted to the position of sub-agent in charge of the Bear's Hill bands. He had his agency farm and ration buildings located in the Peace Hills, near the present city of Wetaskiwin. It is said that here, on these hills, the pipe of peace was passed from mouth to mouth of the braves and ever since, the group of hills, where this took place, has been known as Peace Hills. The name, Wetaskiwin is Cree meaning "the place where Peace was made." The old Fort (Ethier), where Sam Lucas was in charge, is still standing and is an historical show place off the Edmonton and Calgary trail. A son, Sam, with his family is still living on the land.

In 1840 the Crees had asked for a priest and received regular visits from Father Thibeault and later from the beloved Father Lacombe. The Protestant adherents first had the services of a Methodist missionary, Robert Rundle and following him was Rev. Thos. Woolsey. These men worked out of Fort Edmonton Post, visiting the Indian camps.



**An Indian bridal party leaving the United Church on the reserve**

Soon after the Crees settled on their respective reserves, the religious groups made plans to locate missions in the district. The Methodist church made the first move by sending in May of 1881, Rev. Erven Glass, B.A., to establish a mission on the Battle River. While serving at his post the Rev. Glass assisted in translating the Methodist Hymn book into Cree Syllabics and prepared a grammar, primer and language lessons in English and Cree. No doubt he was the first author and intellectual in the area.

The establishment of a mission on the Samson reserve was no simple task. Rev. Glass describes it in his own words: "In May, 1881, my wife and I left Edmonton with team and wagon travelling 60 miles south. Reaching a site selected by Rev. J. MacDougal and myself in April, I pitched a tent, broke two acres of prairie, put in potatoes and turnips and held services with the Indians. Next came the task of erecting a mission house. I had to do most of the work myself, with the help of half breeds. Finally a building 19 x 25 was erected." The mission was situated near the river, on the southern limit of Samson's reserve. Here, three hundred and twenty acres were set apart by the Government for a mission lot.

The Roman Catholics were not far behind. Father Constantine Scollen can be considered the first Roman Catholic Missionary in the area, in 1882.

He was an untiring and outspoken man, who was always one step ahead of civilization. He remained in the area from 1882 until 1886. In 1883 a school house was built one and a half miles to the north of the mission.

In the early history, we cannot go on, without mentioning the Riel Rebellion of 1885. By that time, settlers were beginning to trek in from the south, fording streams, riding, driving oxen or horses.

The month of April, 1885 was a bloody and grief-stricken one. There had been a gigantic Thirst Dance on the reserve during the summer and runners had brought war offerings from the camps and the seeds of unrest were sown. The massacre at Frog Lake will go down in history.

Rev. Glass and family were leaving the reserve for Fort Edmonton and were in the process of hitching up the team when a war party of Crees came upon them. Arrogantly, the Indians forced the missionary to unhitch the horses and then, while the family watched helplessly, the Indians broke into the mission, pillaged it, destroyed the furniture, killed several cattle and rode off with the horses. During that month, missions, company stores, wagon trains and couriers were pillaged or captured. Then one day, April 28, 1885, the law reached Battle River Crossing. After seeing the scarlet-clad men of the North-West Mounted Police and the Nile green uniforms of the 65th Battalion, the Crees were left with no doubt that the well armed representatives of the Queen could soon wipe them out, if the necessity arose. By June, 1885, Louis Riel had been captured and soon after communications between Calgary and Edmonton was uninterrupted again.

The spring of 1886 saw Bobtail accept the half breed script. The chief who was still angry at the treatment he thought his son had received, gave up all rights and privileges on the reserve and moved with several of his followers to private lands. He likely did not realize how, years later, it would affect members of families who were descendants. But we all know how a number of families on the reserve were affected and very nearly lost the right to live there. Finally, by going to law in 1958, and through other channels, it was decided to allow those families affected by the script but who had lived on the reserve through the years and knew no other life, to remain there.

I like to let my imagination go at this point and think of the Indians as they were one hundred or more years ago. They lived as they wished, sufficient unto themselves, without assistance from the white man. They roamed the prairies, fishing, hunting, worshipping the Great Sun God, loving, raising families and dying, fighting for existence against other tribes.

In the early history the medicine men played an important part. Their dress differed from the other men of the tribe. It was made out of skins and decorated with every conceivable antler, tooth, quills and feathers available. They carried pouches which contained various articles and charms. They cured with massage, bone setting, cauterizing, blood letting, poulticing with various plants, roots and other curatives. They often turned to dreams and visions to drive away the evil spirit.

The Indians made their bows and arrows. The arrows were made of flint and poisoned. Many other things were made of stone and wood, such as tomahawks and pipes. Porcupine quills were used for their earliest decorative work. Dancing hoops were made of willow and buckskin. Deer feet and deer claws were used to rattle. In the very early days they wore breast shields made out of moose hide, for fighting. Next to clothing the fire bags were an important item for the Indian. They were his pockets for carrying pipes, tobacco, flint, prized trinkets. They were made of buckskin and done in beads or woven grass. Their musical instruments, the Tom-tom was made of hide drawn tightly over a frame. The Indian dances usually consisted of rhythmic, but not too graceful gestures, attitudes and movements, accompanied to the noise of drums, rattles and bone flutes. The dances were of many names — Buffalo, Deer, Scalp and Chicken, etc. The Pow-Wow is often performed for the entertainment of white people in more recent years. Today a Sun Dance is held each year in the summer. This is a religious ceremony.

The Indian pipes which were used for smoking were made with a bowl of stone and a long reed or carved wooden stem. The pipe was used as a

symbol of peace and war, to seal compacts and as a mark of welcome to strangers (the pipe of peace).

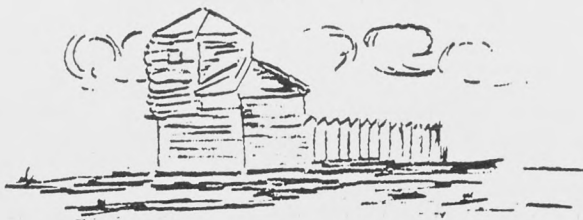
Early saddles were made of antlers, rawhide and Buckskin. Clothing was made out of buckskin and, after beads were available, were elaborate with bead work. Bead work became one of their outstanding handicrafts.

An Indian Sweat House was almost universal among the Indians. It was built almost the same everywhere. Willow rods and pliant stems were stuck in the ground and bent and fastened with switches, into a hemispherical or oblong frame. The houses varied in size according to the number of people they were to accommodate at one time. A hole was dug inside the house but near the door. Into this hole hot stones were then sprinkled with water to create steam. A contrivance built to act as a fan kept the steam circulating. A covering of skins or blankets kept the enclosure tight. The bather would stay a half hour or so and then plunge into cold water of a nearby stream. The steam baths were used as 1. religious rites; 2. medical purposes; 3. social — after battle the braves went into the baths to relax.

I came across the Indian 23rd Psalm, which had been translated into English. The Indian language is not an easy one to translate as theirs is a sign language.

### THE INDIAN TWENTY-THIRD PSALM

The Great Father above is a Shepherd Chief. I am His and with Him I want not and He throws out to me a rope and the name of the rope is love and He draws me to where the grass is green and the water is good and I eat and lie down satisfied. Sometimes my heart is weak and falls down but He lifts it up again and draws me into a good road. His name is wonderful. Sometime, it may be soon, it may be longer. It may be a long long time, He will draw me into a place between the mountains, the Shepherd Chief will meet me and the hunger I have felt all through my life will be satisfied. Sometimes He makes the love rope into whip but afterwards He gives me a staff to lean on. He spreads a table before me, with all kinds of food. He puts His hands upon my head and all the tiredness is gone. My cup He filleth until it runs over. What I tell you is true — I lie not. Thy roads that are away ahead will stay with me through this life and afterwards I will go to live in the big teepee and sit down with the Shepherd Chief, forever.



Even since 1900, the picture of the Indians and their way of life, has changed so much that it is hard to believe. At that time both men and women wore blankets draped around them but gradually they changed over to white man's way of dress. They wore footwear, which they made themselves, out of buckskin. Their hair hung in long braids, feathers quills and elk teeth were often seen dangling at the ends of the braids. Paint which they had prepared themselves, was used on their faces, especially for special occasions. It has been said that the men never needed to shave and they did not grow whiskers or beards. The Indians never speak in high, shrill voices, for they are mostly soft spoken.

The women generally carried their babies on their backs and one wondered how they could grow, as they seemed so tightly laced in. Many children and dogs were generally seen around the camps. We could hear the dogs barking and howling any time we came near. They had plenty of ponies and colts too. The older horses were generally hobbled, so as not to roam too far away while they were grazing on the wild grass of the prairies.

When the Indians of the early 1900's moved about, they lived in tents, although on the reserve, log houses had been built. They seemed to prefer living in the tents. A black kettle hung continually on a tripod outside, under which a smoky fire seemed to be always burning. In fact an Indian smells of smoke, wherever one meets him.

They made Pemmican, a food prepared by pounding Saskatoons or Chokecherries into a piece of dried, cured meat, then wrapping it tightly in a hide and burying it deep in the ground where it would keep for years. A Samson Indian told me that he had recently found such a package of pemmican and had sent it to the University to put in the museum.

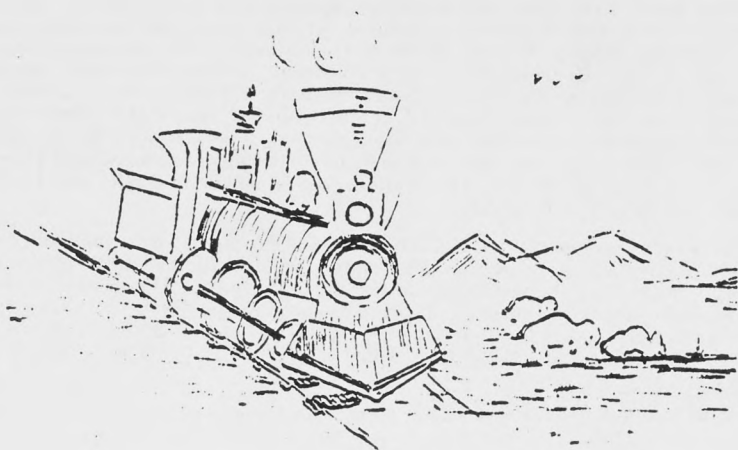
The vine with the shiny leaves and red berries, known as Kinnikinnik, which is seen so often at the edge of timber, was used for years for tobacco.

It seems regrettable to think that some people insist on selling the Indians liquor, for it does them absolutely no good and it brings out the worst of their natures. The men beat up their squaws and they fight among themselves and the little children suffer.

In all the years that we have known the Indians, they have never tried to harm us and it is my belief that if they are not always as we think they should be, we probably have helped to make them so.

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## **GEOGRAPHY and TOPOGRAPHY of the ANGUS RIDGE COMMUNITY**

The Angus Ridge District lies in what is known in Alberta as the Park Land. It is part of a large plain dotted with Poplar and Balm of Gilead trees, with the Battle River forming part of its southern boundary.

The soil for the most part is a black clay loam, rich in humus on a clay subsoil. The depth of the black loam varies in different parts of the district. Toward the west the land is very flat and the clay subsoil close to the surface. This holds the water so that in wet weather there are large sloughs in the area. A few miles to the east the land gets more rolling, due to a series of draws that drains water into the river.

Along the river there are some large trees-spruce, poplar, balm and the odd birch with an abundance of saskatoons, cranberries, raspberries and wild black currants. These fruits were used extensively by the first settlers, providing them with their only fruit.

Wild roses grow in profusion as do many other wild flowers. The wild rose being the floral emblem of Alberta, is rightly named as it is to be found almost everywhere.

## **HISTORICAL DEVELOPMENT OF THE AREA**

The first land was broken for cultivation about the year 1880. Since that time most of the land in the area has been cleared of its poplar and willow cover and the land put into grains and grasses. Just enough native trees remain to provide some shelter for livestock in the pasture.

The area has been used for mixed farming with wheat, oats, barley and rye doing well in most places and many grasses and legumes grown for pasture and hay. The livestock industry has developed to a high degree in the community and cattle raising in particular has made this area well known in Alberta as well as Canada and the United States.

Vegetables of all kinds do exceedingly well and people are experimenting more with apples, plums and small fruits.

A coal mine was located at Bears Hill west of the Bears Hill School, on the Hodson place, and supplied fuel for the settlers for a number of years. A good grade of gravel was found along the Battle River, especially near the Latimer and Wolter's place. Art Wolters opened up a pit and supplied gravel for construction work and roads.

## INDUSTRIES

The main industry of this community is Agriculture, mixed farming is done extensively. The district is noted for its livestock. Several families are feeding feeder cattle and have been successful in that enterprise. There are several outstanding herds of registered cattle in the district and as one drives along the country road, it is quite a sight to see several hundred head of cattle grazing in the roadside pastures. Aberdeen Angus, Hereford and Shorthorns are the predominant breeds. Dairying is one of the main industries, as the majority of farmers do some milking.

Poultry raising for the production of eggs (especially hatching eggs) is gone into, in quite a big way.

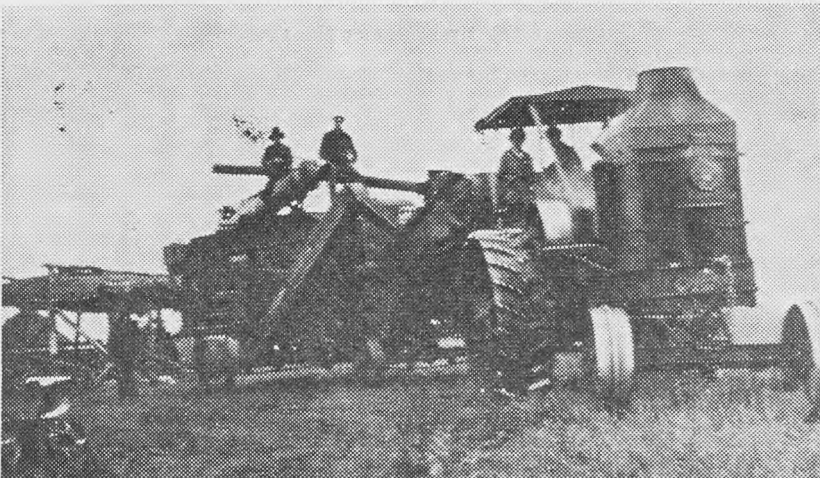
Three 4-H Clubs, namely Beef, Dairy and Home Decorating are very active in their different groups. The members are showing a great deal of enthusiasm in their different departments. Several of our young people have won outstanding honors with their showing and judging in Edmonton and other centres.

Livestock from the district has been shown not only at our own Agricultural Fair in Wetaskiwin but in Edmonton, Calgary, Camrose and other points around, with very satisfactory results.

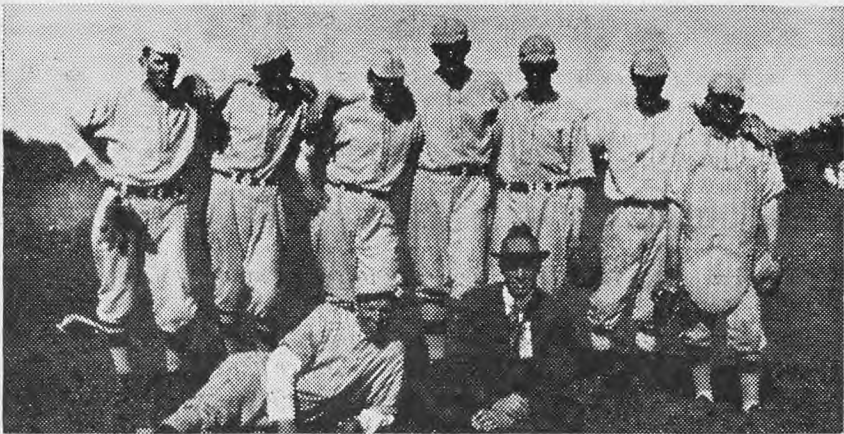
The Lights Horse Association is very active in the community. They have their own corral on the Frank Ballhorn farm, where they have a weekly get together during the summer, rope calves and practice gymkhana events. Many of their members are presently raising their own light horses. Members also participate in the Light Horse Shows throughout Central Alberta.



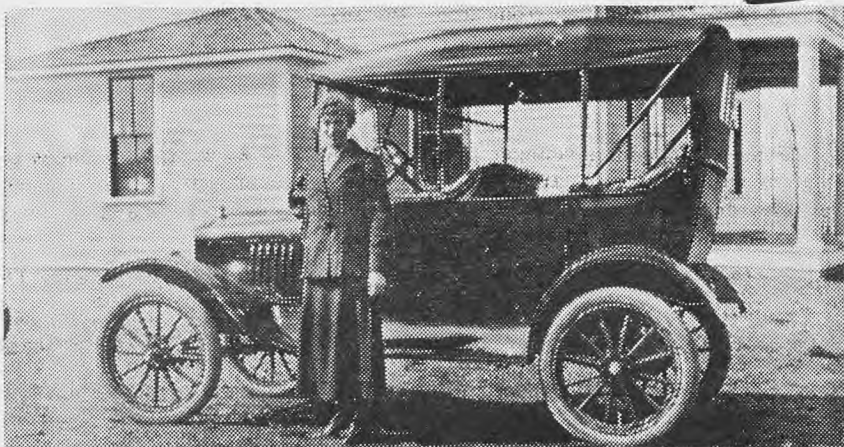
**Threshing from stacks of sheaves in the early days.**



**The threshing machine on the move to another field.**



First Angus Ridge ball team. Standing left to right, Norman Doupe, Art Newman, Louis Deil, Roy Ballhorn, Percy Doupe, Len Snow, Curtis Jackson. Below: Geo. Schantz, Frank Ballhorn



One of the first cars in the district



Picnic at Pigeon Lake about 1919

## THE ANGUS RIDGE DISTRICT

Angus Ridge has derived its name from one of the oldest pioneer families who settled there in 1891. Some of the families are still living on the land, which was first owned by the Angus family. A slight raise of land stretching through the locality, probably accounts for the final word Ridge — hence Angus Ridge.

The school was named Angus Ridge and the community hall was also given the name. What better name could the Women's Institute find when it was organized in 1917? It has remained the Angus Ridge Women's Institute ever since.

The district just touches the Hobbema Indian Reservation in several places and also the Battle River on the south. To the east is the Battle River District, to the north-east and north is the Cherry Grove District and the Bear's Hill District lies to the west. It is cut up by three main roads running north and south and the usual cross roads. These roads are nearly all graded and gravelled.

Most of the people who settled here were from Eastern Canada or the United States, with a few from across the sea.

### TOM ANGUS

Tom Angus and a younger brother, Norman came to this North-West country with his parents at the age of 9, in the year of 1891. He can remember how desolate and wild it was here, with bush everywhere and the only people he saw were Indians or half breeds.

For a year they lived in a sod shack and he remembers how happy his mother was when his father put up a frame house. Those years are still very vivid memories to him. His parents worked very hard with only a few hand implements. They acquired a few horses and things became somewhat easier. Then came the steam engine and in more recent years the machinery was all handled by tractors. Tom learned to knit when a young boy, using yarn his mother had spun from the sheep's wool. He made his own socks and mitts. He never forgot how to do this and still can knit a very fine pair of socks.



Tom Angus

In 1892 more acquaintances came west and soon a busy community was established. How happy every one was when the neighbors gathered for a party, a dance or a picnic. They danced in one room emptied of most of its furniture, to the tune of a fiddle or an accordion. Occasionally the grey streaks of dawn could be seen in the east before they dispersed to their homes.

Tom and Norman attended school at Battle River for a while. They then went back east for several years where the father Andrew, contracted pneumonia and died. That meant that the boys had to take over the farm in 1905.

In 1907 Tom married Cecil Grant. He acquired the quarter of land just across the road from his father's homestead. Here, his three sons, Lloyd,



Ralph and Donald were born. His brother Norman, farmed his father's land until 1918, when he and his wife, Lizzie, moved to Strome.

Tom and Cecil were an important part of the community in which they lived. Mrs. Angus was a charter member of the Angus Ridge W.I. and worked tirelessly for the organization. In handicraft, she was outstanding. Her interest in rug making from old materials won her many ribbons and one silver cup. She exhibited them at Exhibitions, Fairs and at W.I. Conferences and conventions. One was sent to Scotland as an exhibit. Another of her interests was quilt making — whenever a quilt was being made, she was sure to be there to help with it. In 1952, she passed away, very suddenly at the age of 68 years.

In 1934, during the depression years, Tom Angus' land was taken over by Mons Dyberg of the Malmo district. Tom and his family moved to one of the original quarters of land bought by his father in the early days. Today, in 1959, the youngest son, Donald, his wife, Viola and son Billy do the farming. The young people have built themselves a comfortable home with modern kitchen and conveniences. Tom continues to live in the old place on the same yard.

Tom at the age of 80 years, leads a very active life. He has always been interested in the Co-operative movement and has been a director of the Co-op Store in Wetaskiwin for 20 years. He also acted as President and director of the Angus Ridge Community hall, and is still acting on the Board of Directors as auditor. At present he is President of the Angus Ridge Rural Telephone Company.

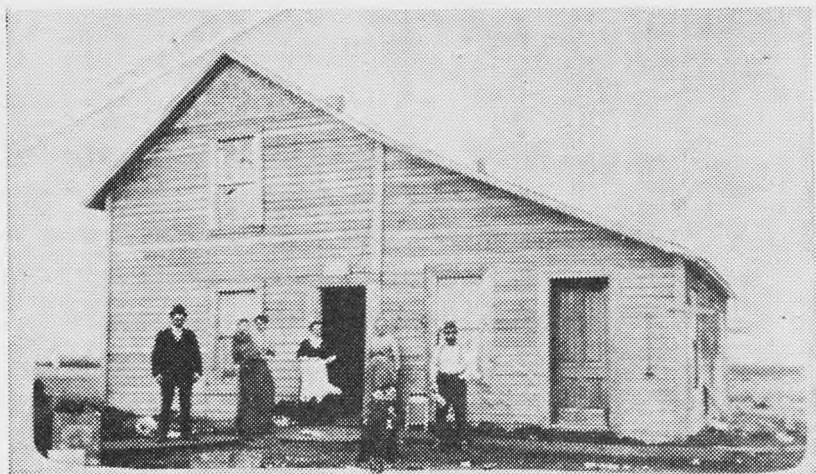
Donald married Viola Kaiser, of the Nashville district in 1941. A son, Wm. Gordon, was born to them. In 1945 they bought the Harry Grant home place and his son Billy assists in the farming. Both Viola and Donald have acted on the Community Hall Board for the past 15 years and at present Donald is president of that organization. Viola joined the Angus Ridge W.I. soon after she was married and has acted as both President and Secretary-Treasurer of this group. She is a great lover of flowers and has a wonderful productive garden as well as outstanding flowers.

### THE ROBERT ANGUS FAMILY

Robert Angus, better known as "Bob" arrived in the Angus Ridge district in 1892. He was a half brother of Tom Angus. He, with his wife and one son, Billy, settled on the homestead where Levi Evans once lived and where the Joe Bentleys now reside. Two children, Annie (who is now Mrs. Horace French of Wetaskiwin) and a son, were born to them while living on the homestead. Bob Angus had been a civil engineer in Ontario, so farming in this new land was indeed an experience. He was one of the first men to promote the building of a school at Battle River. In 1894 he was granted permission to manage the Angus Ridge Post Office, North West Territories. The name has remained the same for the district ever since. Their first home was built of logs, as most of the houses were. Many people were given shelter there until their own houses were ready. The W. J. Bailey family remained with them for some time while their home was being prepared. They boarded the first teacher who taught in Battle River school. Her name was Mrs. Bowan. In 1903 the family left the district to reside in Wetaskiwin. Altogether, seven children were born to them. Two little girls died on the same day of diphtheria. Those were trying times. No one could be at the funeral and no one could come in to offer comfort and sympathy. Bob Angus went into the implement business in Wetaskiwin and was mayor of that little city for three years.

Mrs. Angus was an invalid for a number of years before her death. Bob lived to a good age. One of his sons, Bob Angus, and his family are residents of Wetaskiwin. A daughter Eva (Mrs. Parker) lives in Lethbridge and Jean (Mrs. Archibald) resides in Garnde Prairie. Another son Billy has been a resident of California for many years.





The home built by Wm. Wilson in 1894 with lean-to added in 1895.  
Served as post office and telephone central about 1900

### THE WILSON FAMILY

William Wilson, Sr. lived in Genesee, Idaho, where many stories of a most wonderful land to the north (Canada) kept trickling in. So it was, in 1892, that his neighbors decided to send him to this "promised" land to see if it were so much better than their own.

Mr. Wilson was very favorably impressed with this new country, which turned out to be our own community. So he filed on a homestead in Angus Ridge District, and returned to Idaho, where he impressed his neighbors so with his stories of what a wonderful country this was, that the following spring homes were uprooted once more.

The Wilsons, Halversons, Charlie Wigg and Martin Emberston all started for Canada.

Railroad grades were not good in those days and there had been much spring flooding, so a roundabout route was taken to Newport, Washington. The father had started about a month earlier with the cattle. At Newport everything was loaded onto a boat and the trip up the Columbia River to Revelstoke was completed successfully.

At Revelstoke the unloading and loading took place once again — this time for the train trip to Wetaskiwin. However, at Fort McLeod, Alberta, a very discouraging situation arose — the cattle were put under quarantine. It was very discouraging, but there was nothing they could do, so Mr. Wilson stayed behind with his stock.

On arriving in Wetaskiwin the other members of the family found a huge tent — like a circus tent — set up to house all new arrivals such as themselves. They remained over-night until the men could get the freight cars unloaded and wagons set up ready to make the final lap of their journey to their new homes.

At that time Jack Angus had a large sod house on what we know as "the Bailey place," and it was in this house that the William Wilson family settled for the time being.

It was three months later that William Wilson arrived with the cattle. They were driven from Fort McLeod to Calgary, with both feed and water very scarce as it had been a dry year. Every bit of water used by the men had to be boiled, and, as fuel was very scarce on the prairie, they used "buffalo chips" for their fires. At Calgary the cattle were loaded and shipped by train. Snow came early that year and remained for many months. Feed was scarce and it was a hard winter on the livestock.

Mr. Wilson set about building a home as soon as he could. The main

part of the house was made of logs purchased from a Mr. Weaklard of Red Deer Lake. He hewed the logs and put up the walls, (a few of these logs are still in the neighborhood). That winter the family lived in a lean-to built of a single ply of boards. It was terribly cold and they tried to keep it warm by pasting paper over the cracks and by using a cook stove at one end and a heater at the other, each with its tin stove-pipe sticking up from the roof. This new home of the Wilsons became quite a landmark for it was a two-storey structure — quite unusual in those days.

The Wilsons settled down in their new home and took part in all community affairs. Church services, card parties and dances were held in the homes. Charlie Nelles usually "fiddled" for the dances, and, often in the summer, some of the young boys stood by to brush away the mosquitoes while he kept the music going for the dancers. The children went to the Battle River School. They drove by the Bob Angus place to pick up Mrs. Bowen, who was the first teacher.

When Bob Angus moved to Wetaskiwin the Post Office was moved to the Wilson home. Joe Cowan, the first mail man travelled from Wetaskiwin to Angus Ridge, Lewisville, and Duhamel. In 1903 a telephone line was built from Wetaskiwin to the Wilson home. There a pay-station was established and the whole community had the use of telephone service in times of necessity.

Ed Wilson remembers attending the first fair in Wetaskiwin in 1897. He had one of those "new-fangled" things — the camera — and wanted to take a picture of the Indian Pow-Wow. The Indians put all their wagons in a circle with the tongue of one on the end of the wagon in front of it. They danced inside the circle. When the Chief saw Ed with his camera he was very angry and insisted that he go away. But Ed did not go far. Then the Chief came towards him and pulled out his tomahawk, however, the Royal North West Mounted Police, Ephraim Girling, was nearby on his black horse, and he intervened to "save Ed's scalp" as it were.

Ed Wilson and his brother Bill can tell many tales of those early days and of things far removed from our modern way of life.

### THE ED WILSONS

The quarter section N.W. 9-45-23-W4, where the Ed Wilsons have resided until recently, was first owned by N. W. Gould. The house he built in 1894, is still in fair condition. A Belgian remittance man lived there a year—later a half-breed by the name of Bunno stayed there for a while. Then Mr. and Mrs. E. Girling resided there from 1899 to 1901.

Just about that time Ed and Fred Wilson rented the place for two years. Their bachelor quarters was the gathering place for the youngsters of the neighborhood. The bachelors were in great demand at dances and parties.

The Byfords bought the place from Mr. Gould and lived there until 1917. In that year Ed Wilson bought the farm and brought his young bride, Molly Hagen, to the district. Molly was a bookkeeper at Gross' lumber yard in Wetaskiwin before her marriage.

Through the years, Mrs. Wilson boarded a number of teachers who taught at Angus Ridge school.

Whenever, anyone wanted to be accompanied on the organ or piano, Mrs. Wilson was always ready. In the W.I. she was sometimes called the official pianist.

In 1958 Ed took ill and they were compelled to move to town to be near a doctor and hospital. At present the Wilson place is vacant but Mr. Wilson still owns it. Two children were born to them, Lloyd, who became a teacher and resides with his family in Wetaskiwin, and Evelyn who also became a teacher and is now Mrs. Hampson and resides with her family in Calgary.

During the years Molly Wilson did a lot of sewing for neighbors and people in the district. She was clever with her hands and could do any kind of needle work.

Mrs. Wilson is a life member of the Angus Ridge W.I.

These kind-hearted people, at several times during the years, gave a home to children whose parents wished them to have an upbringing on the farm and a chance to attend a rural school.

(Since writing the above, Mr. Ed Wilson passed away in the Wetaskiwin Community Hospital in March of 1959.)

## BILLY WILSON

The place, N.E. 17-45-23-4 now known as the Billy Wilson farm, was first owned by Bill's father, William Wilson. He built a log house in 1891 and later added to it.

Young Bill married Lizzie LePage in 1913 and lived for a year or so on the Fisher quarter. Here their first son, George was born. They commenced building a better house on their quarter in 1909 and when it was finished the Langfords lived in it for a while. Mr. Langford taught at the Angus Ridge School.

Another son, Vern, was born to the Wilsons. As the years passed on, Bill moved to town — his sons grew up and married and had families of their own.

## WATERSTONS

Andrew Waterston and son, Tom, arrived in the province from Ontario, in 1890. They Came from Calgary through to Edmonton with horses and wagon. They liked the lay of the land, which lay around the district of Wetaskiwin. So they decided to settle in what is now known as the Angus Ridge district.

Andrew Waterston Sr. homesteaded the quarter, later owned by N. A. Krueger, S.E. of Section 20, and now owned by Art Wolters — his son Tom homesteaded in 1890, the farm where the Roy Ballhorns lived and is now occupied by the Harold Simonson, the N.E. of Section 20.

They built sod shacks, which barely protected them from the elements. This Andrew Waterston Sr. had a family of five boys and three girls. In 1892 Andrew Waterston Jr. and Willie Waterston arrived. They took up homesteads too. Andrew homesteaded the quarter later owned by Carl Krutzfeldt and George Waterston the quarter east of there. William Waterston homesteaded the quarter, now owned by Harold Simonson, across from the Billy Wilson place. The old log house is still standing.

Duncan MacEachern arrived in 1897 and bought a CPR quarter, directly east of Art Wolters. Here he and his family lived with William Waterston for three years.

The first threshing machine was a tread mill, pulled by horses and brought in in 1894. The first machine burned but they got another one later on. Settlers took their wheat to Strathcona to have it ground into flour. The trip took them many days.

There were no churches, but Plymouth Brethren held services at the home of J. J. Rix. The Waterston family were deeply religious and family devotions were held, regardless of circumstances.

Norman MacEachern, who is a resident of Wetaskiwin, lived with his father on the farm for three years. He tells of some of the narrow escapes they had from Prairie fires. Once their buildings were threatened, and would most certainly have been lost, had it not been for passing Indians who helped fight the blaze.

On the quarter N.E. 20 — where the Simonsons now live, is a maple tree, which must have been planted by the Waterstons — this tree has always been cherished by the Ballhorns and Simonsons and its spreading branches cover quite a portion of the yard.

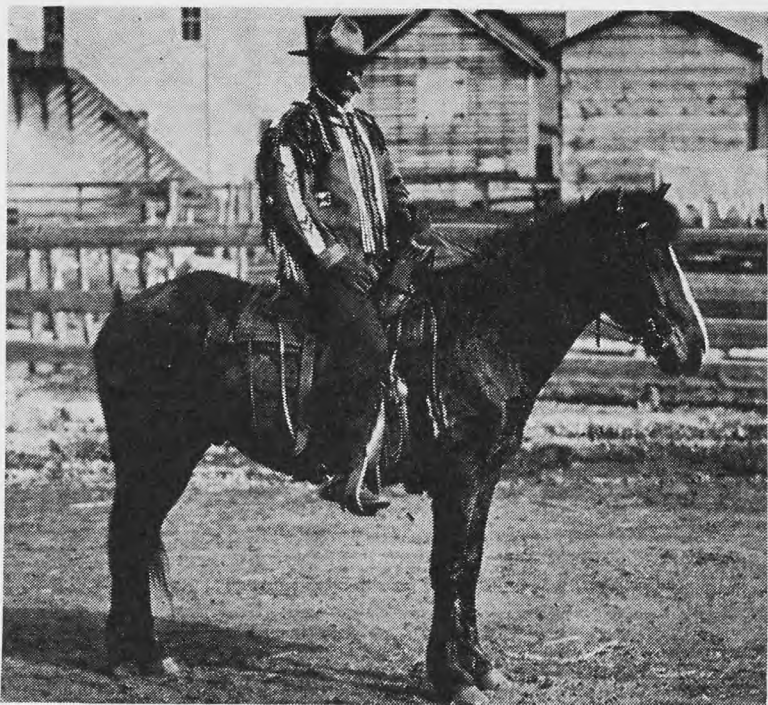
Mr. Andrew Waterston died in Wetaskiwin in 1905.

## GEORGE WATERSTON

The S.W. 9-45-23-W4 was first owned and improved by Pete Waterston in the early years. Then when Pete died while he was in British Columbia, his brother George took over and he and his family continued to live there.

Mrs. Waterston was a delicate and frail person but was very hard working. They raised a family of three daughters and two sons. Mrs. Edith McKenna and Mrs. Jessie Gibbons of Edmonton and Mrs. Ernie Girling of Ponoka, Clifford who now resides in Edmonton and Wilfred. Mrs. Waterston and her daughters became members of the Angus Ridge Women's Institute when it was organized and the first meeting was held at their home. Mrs. Waterston passed on to an untimely death and Mr. Waterston carried on. The family gradually left and George was left alone. He was President of the Angus Ridge Hall for years and was a director of the Wetaskiwin Co-op Store for a long period of time. Clifford enlisted in the last war.

Mr. Waterston was accidentally killed by a bull he was handling in the corral. Clifford Waterston is the present owner of the property.



**First member of the RNWMP to be stationed in Wetaskiwin and one of the district's earliest pioneers, Eph Girling astride his saddle horse in the 1890's  
—Photo Courtesy E. A. Reynolds**

### **THE GIRLING FAMILY**

Ephraim Girling was a colorful figure of the Wetaskiwin District before the turn of the century, especially when he wore the uniform of the Mounted Police. He was a good story teller and was always welcome at any gathering.

He married Maggie Gould, a sprightly and energetic blue-eyed lass, who kept her lord and master under control most of the time. They reared a large family and a beloved grand daughter is now a good member of the Angus Ridge Women's Institute.

After the Girlings were married they managed a bake shop in Wetaskiwin. Many of Mrs. Girling's recipes became famous in the district. They also lived for a while on the farm now owned by Ed Wilson. Afterwards they moved to a farm located on the edge of the Hobbema Reserve. Here they lived until he passed away at a good old age. Mrs. Girling did the milking of several cows when she was at the age of 75, kept her garden and was always pleased to prepare a dinner for friends or relations. Now she resides with her daughter at Calmar, Alberta.

Looking through a notebook of Mr. Girlings I found a document from the Department of the Interior, Ottawa, granting permission to make an entry in lieu of the North-West quarter of Section 32, Township 45, Range 22, West of the Fourth. The document is yellow with age and dated September 30th, 1897.

In this book I also found many of Mrs. Girling's recipes for wedding cakes, doughnuts, ginger snaps, cream cakes, buns, etc.

Now in 1959 Don and Marion Gilchrist and family have taken over the Girling property and are making it their permanent home. Several years ago a comfortable new house was built. Don manages a livestock buying station near Wetaskiwin, and Marion assists him with his business whenever she can find time to do so.



## THE WM. THIRSK FAMILY

In 1897, Wm. Thirsk, a farmer from Goderich, Ont., journeyed westward in search of land. He was so impressed with this new frontier that he returned to Ontario and made arrangements to move to Alberta. In 1898 he returned with his wife and two small daughters, Maggie and Gertie. He rented a farm for two years. This was the Andrew Angus place in the Angus Ridge district. In 1900 he purchased CPR land, the N.E. of 8-45-24-W4, in the same district and commenced the task of erecting buildings, breaking land and doing the many things needed to be done in a new country.

Five other children, Stanley, Irene, Annie and Bruce and Eldon were all born in Alberta.

In 1903 when the Angus Ridge school was built, Mr. Thirsk acted as one of its first trustees. The land where the school was built was donated by Mr. Thirsk. In 1927 when the Community Hall was built, two acres were bought from Mr. Thirsk for its location. For many years Mrs. Thirsk boarded some of the teachers who taught at the school. A son, Bruce, married one of these teachers, Miss Ann Broderson, and is at present living in Vancouver.

Mrs. Thirsk lived a busy life, raising her family of seven children and finding time to help out in the community. She was a member of the Angus Ridge W.I. for many years. She was also a life member of the Order of the Eastern Star. She died at her home in 1948 at the age of 79.

Bill Thirsk made a hobby of raising pure bred Shorthorn cattle and Clyde horses. He never showed or exhibited them but raised them for his own need and pleasure he received from working with them. Mr. Thirsk passed away at his home at the age of 87 years in 1946. Their daughter, Annie, who was always kind and thoughtful to her parents, passed away after a lengthy illness, several years after her mother died.

Stanley, the eldest son, now farms his father's land and still lives in the original log house built in 1900. Rooms have been added as they were needed. Stanley and his wife Oriole (who was Oriole Bye) have two children, Dennis and Lynda.

Some of the heirlooms brought to Alberta by the Thirsk family were a bible dating back to 1600, a candle maker and several text books of the 19th. century.



Pride of the farm, old Tom and Jerry, with Otto Nieman on the load of hay



## THE TOST FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Herman Tost and family, left Berlin, Germany, in 1885 for South America. They settled in the country of Chile and lived there for 13 years. They felt that they were not progressing in their efforts of making a good home for their children, so decided to make a move north to Canada in 1898.

They travelled by boat, along the coast of the beautiful Pacific Ocean and docked at the port of Seattle. Then by rail to Vancouver, Calgary and made Edmonton their destination. The family stayed there for about two months, while Mr. Tost scouted around looking for land. He came south to Wetaskiwin and chose the Angus Ridge district, as a place, where he would like to make a home. He bought a half section of land in April of 1898 — the east half of section 19-Township 45-23-W4. This land had no buildings on it of any kind. The family pitched a tent and made it their home, until they could build a log house. The first thought in mind was to buy a team of horses, so, they could make some headway and get started with the building.

First they built a small shed for their two horses and a cow. Alas, the summer passed away, altogether too soon and fall and winter came upon them before they were half prepared.

Alberta wasn't South America and the tent wasn't adequate for winter living. They moved into the little stable and made it their living quarters, to shelter them from the winter cold. Many were the hardships this family endured, during those first years. They lived in this dwelling for three years, until enough logs could be hauled home to build a larger place to live in. They had to travel eighteen miles by team, to get the logs, in 30 to 40 below weather.



The log house built by the Tost family in 1902

The summers were busy ones for the Tost family, brushing and breaking up land to grow some grain. Most important of all, a good garden of vegetables and potatoes to tide them over the long winter and until they grew another crop the next year.

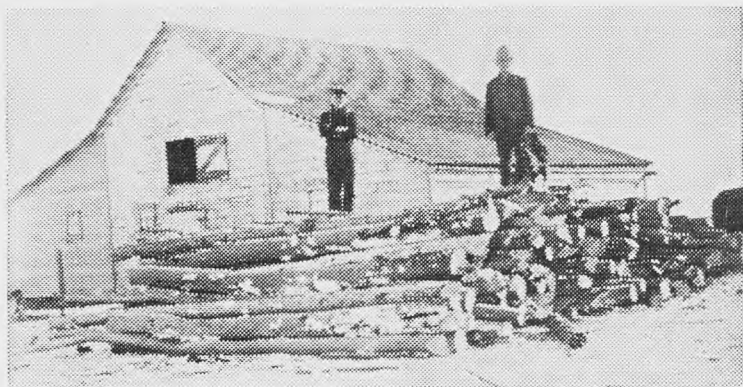
The first grain that they raised in this country was threshed by horse power, as there were no steam engines in those days, to run the separator. It took four teams of horses to keep the machine going.

They lived on his place for nine years, when they sold the land to Dr. Schriefels. They then bought a quarter section S.W. 17-45-23-W4 from Wm. Jankowske and moved to this place in 1907.

Mr. and Mrs. Tost had a family of three children, two sons and one

daughter. One son died in Chile when a small child. Clara, the daughter is married to Clayton Rix and resides in Wetaskiwin. Eric married Molly Stadel of Bashaw and is living on the home place, Eric and Molly had a family of three children. One son, Ernest, is married and he and his wife and family are living with his father and mother.

Mrs. Tost Sr. passed away in 1924 at the age of 79. Mr. Tost Sr. passed away in 1940 at the age of 84.



A lot of hard work went into cutting and hauling this pile of logs but the work has just begun. The Nieman brothers, Otto and Hugo, have still to saw and pile firewood at their home in 1905



Picking raspberries on the Nieman farm in 1908



Natural hazards to pioneer travel

## THE A. J. RIX FAMILY

Austin J. Rix was two and a half years old when he came to the Bears Hill district with his parents in the year of 1893. Austie says he can still remember his father and older brothers taking off their first crop from the newly broken land. They used a scythe and a cradle and raked the hay into piles using a long handled wooden rake.

When he was ready to start school the Bears Hill school was not open so he went to stay with his married sister, Mrs. Alf Ellis who lived in the Cherry Grove district. From there he attended the Battle River school. When the Angus Ridge school was opened in 1903, he was one of the first pupils to attend.

In July, 1917, Austin married Margaret Thirsk, known as Maggie. For the first year and a half of their marriage they lived on the old Carpenter farm in the Haultain district. In 1919 he purchased the C.P.R. quarter S.E. 8-45-23-4 from Mr. Langford. Mr. Langford had previously bought this land from Wm. Thirsk. Mr. Rix is still living on this quarter. It was here that his two sons, Gordon and Clarence grew up and attend the Angus Ridge School.

Mr. and Mrs. Rix led an active and busy life in the community. Mrs. Rix was a faithful member of the local W.I. and acted as secretary of that organization for many years. Mr. Rix took an active interest in the district school, being a member of the school board.

When the Poultry Producers were organized in 1941 Mr. Rix became one of the first directors and is still filling this position. About that time he became interested in poultry and had as many as fifteen hundred laying hens. He also became interested in pure bred Hereford cattle for a short time but discontinued that business and kept on with the raising of chickens for the production of eggs.

In 1948 he was elected as councillor of the municipality and later became Reeve. He was also a member of the Wetaskiwin Hospital Board and became chairman of the Agricultural Service Board.

Mrs. Maggie Rix passed away in 1943 at the age of 47 years. Several years later Mr. Rix married again and he and his wife are living in a comfortable home on the farm that he first bought.

A son, Gordon and his family live in Edmonton and Clarence and family reside in Wetaskiwin. Clarence, Lois and family have lived most of their married lives in the Angus Ridge district and although they have now moved into the town they are still considered members of the community.



Trick photography by Otto Nieman shows two men doing 4 men's work. A double exposure shows he and his brother Hugo working on both ends of a log at the same time in 1905

## THE NIEMAN FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Nieman Sr. came to Alberta from Minnesota, U.S.A. in 1900. They had come to the U.S. from Germany, when they were a young married couple, she eighteen and he was twenty-one. They lived twenty years in the U.S. and then the urge to move to a land with better opportunities came to the man of the family. Before leaving the U.S. however, Mr. Nieman, took his family to the state of Alabama, where they lived for nine months. Not pleased with what Alabama had to offer, Mr. Nieman decided on going to far away Alberta, Canada.

They came to Canada, on a mixed train, passenger and freight. They had a family of eight, five girls and three boys. One daughter had died in the U.S.

Liking the looks of the land in the Angus Ridge district, southeast of Wetaskiwin, they bought a half section, the north half of the section 18-45-23-W4 from a Mr. Leinweber. One of these quarters had been a homestead. The Niemans not only bought the land but all the equipment, as well as the livestock. The land was worth two dollars and a half an acre at that time. A log house was on the place and they added a lean-to with a sod roof. This roof had a tendency to let the rain drip through but the more it rained, the better grew the grass and flowers on the sod.

Here, the family lived for eight years. The new house was built in 1909. The growing family of young people had many a good time in the old log house and this home was soon the centre of attraction for young and old.

A low spot in front of the house and barns, was filled with water, during the wet years. It was known as the Nieman slough. During the summer there were home-made boats on it. In the fall and early winter several hundred young people would gather, to enjoy the good clean sport of outdoor skating. At times there would be bonfires, other times the moonlight was enough. During the dry years, the slough land produced a good crop. Other pastimes of those days, was sleigh rides and dances and picnics and card parties, with an occasional pie social or basket social thrown in, for good measure.

There did not seem to be much brush or trees around, so after the new house was built, shelter belts and shrubbery was planted. Today, fine trees and shrubs encircle the buildings.

Wood was used in the stoves and it had to be hauled from as far west or further, as Hobbema. Great loads were hauled home, so there would always be a year's supply on hand. It took a good day from early in the morning, until late at night to make the trip, with a team.

Mrs. Nieman Sr. had brought with her from the U.S. a Singer sewing machine, which Mrs. Otto Nieman is still using. With all those pretty young ladies growing up, a sewing machine was almost a necessity.

Towards spring the butchering had to be done. It was a job too, that belonged to a category all by itself. Both the men and women were busy — for after the butchering was done, the meat had to be hung up to cool. Then came the cutting and sausage making and lard rendering. Brine was made to cure the hams and shoulders and bacon.

The house which was built in 1909, is still in good condition and is now equipped with electricity, hot and cold water and at the time of writing is occupied by Mr. and Mrs. Otto Nieman.

One by one, the large family, left for home of their own, to return for occasional visits. One son, Otto, remained with his parents. In the fall of 1917, Otto married Ella Schamuhn of Leduc and brought his bride home to reside on the home farm. Here they lived with Otto's parents until the mother passed away in 1934 and the father in 1938.

Otto has been a member of the Wetaskiwin Community Band since 1908. He first joined under the leadership of Father Walravens. He plays the base horn. Many a time he walked in to town to practice and back again. Otto has another hobby and that is photography. He has books filled with pictures he took and developed himself.

To Ella and Otto were born two lovely daughters, Doreen now Mrs. Wally Jones of Waskatenau and Shirley, Mrs. Anton Jensen, of Red Deer. These two daughters became accomplished pianists.

Ella is a life member of the Angus Ridge W.I. and both she and Otto have been active in community affairs.



## THE J. W. BAILEY FAMILY

John Bailey was a merchant of Manton, Michigan but had heard so much about the great country in Western Canada with its opportunities that he decided to move there with his family. His wife and four children, Gladys, Lillian, Ward and George accompanied him on his journey and with them brought enough furniture to start housekeeping.

They planned to settle near Calgary but they were not satisfied there for Mr. Bailey wanted to grow grain. All he could see around Calgary was range land for livestock. They went further north to Wetaskiwin where they could see at a glance that the soil was black and would produce most anything if properly cultivated.

They arrived in the Angus Ridge district in November of 1900 and bought Johnny Angus' homestead for \$1,000, the N.W. 4-45-23-W4. The family stayed for two weeks with R. M. Angus while Mr. Bailey built a shack of logs with a sod roof. Into this house Mrs. Bailey and her children moved along with her fine furniture from Michigan.

One of Mrs. Bailey's favorite stories was that while they were living there, an early thaw came in February, which soaked away the sod roof and practically drowned the family and the furniture. Ward Bailey still has a bureau and a rocking chair which had been used in the shack.

The next spring a better house was built and the youngest son, Maynard was born. With his children growing up, Mr. Bailey became interested in getting a school in the district. In 1903 the Angus Ridge school was opened and he became its first Secretary-Treasurer.

In 1907, the Baileys moved to a farm about two miles west of Wetaskiwin. Here they grew garden vegetables and sold the produce to customers in the town. No one could grow better celery or potatoes! Ward (one of the sons) still grows potatoes from the seed his folks brought with them from Michigan. The name of the variety is "Potentate."

John Bailey also took a keen interest in raising pure bred Duroc-Jersey hogs. He and his sons travelled all over Western Canada, showing them at fairs and shows. In 1917 they moved back to their farm in Angus Ridge but he continued in the hog business until his health failed. He purchased two more quarters of land, the N.E. 5-45-23-W4 and the S.W. 3-45-23-W4 for which he paid three dollars an acre with 10 years to pay.

Mrs. Bailey was a very interested member of the Angus Ridge W.I. She had a gift for reciting and was always ready to give of her best whenever the occasion arose. How proud and happy she would have been to know that her granddaughter, Agnes was Provincial Convener of Handicraft for the Alberta W.I. for four years. Cuttings from Mrs. Bailey's yellow rose bush are to be found in many gardens in the community.

When Mr. Bailey's health failed he and Mrs. Bailey went to Oregon to live and it was there that Mr. Bailey passed away. Mrs. Bailey returned to Alberta to live out her life with her family. George farmed his father's place until about 1942 when he and his family moved to Vancouver. Ward still farms the two other quarters — one in Angust Ridge and the other, where he resides, in the Battle River district. Gladys died in 1943. Lillian lives in Kelowna and Maynard is in Prince George, B.C.

## THE HUDSON GRANT FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Hudson Grant came to Alberta in April 1902 after his father, Mr. Jarvis Grant had arrived two years previously from Minnesota to look the country over. They took up land on the Battle River in the Battle River district being the north half of 27-44-23 west of the 4th.

Mrs. Grant and the three children, Helen, Manfred and Bernice came to Wetaskiwin on the train and had to wait at the old Wetaskiwin Hotel, until Mr. Grant arrived with the car of settlers effects. The hotel rooms were without heat in April and they nearly perished with cold; However, as soon as Mr. Grant arrived he ordered a load of lumber and by night he had a roof over their heads and their stove set up so they could thaw out.

The next job was to unload the car of stock and furniture. He had four head of horses and a plough, two wagons, a binder, seeder, harrows and some household effects.

There were no roads as we know them today, they were mostly trails across the country, for the land was not fenced. Those who were travelling



chose the shortest and driest trails. Even then, there were bottomless mud holes where teams and wagons would get stuck and have to be unloaded and reloaded after the wagon was pulled out of the mud. The mud in those days was something. In the rainy weather it would be almost bottomless and after it dried to a certain extent, it would ball up on the wheels until they could hardly turn, and men's feet would get so heavy and clumsy they could hardly get around. Even after there were cars in this country, it was a problem to get about if there should be a shower, for the clay turned like grease and you were an expert driver or Lady Luck was with you, if you didn't slip off into the ditch or get stuck, with the mud rolling up on the wheels till they couldn't turn. In either case, you either abandoned the car or sat it out till it dried out; sometimes an hour made a lot of difference. I have seen a load of wheat stuck in mud up to the axels on the hill going down onto the Grant Bridge over the Battle River.

Of course when the Grant family arrived, they had no house on their land but there was a vacant house on what was known as the Spencer quarter, about a mile from their place. It was little more than a granary but they lived in it till fall when there was a homestead house, with a sod roof, on land about a mile west of where their land was, and as it would be warmer than the one they were living in, they moved there for the winter.

The first consideration of a new settler was to provide shelter for the family and food for the table, and as there was abundance of grass, of course a cow was a must. Mr. Grant bought a cow from a neighbor living on the old Vaughn place. She turned out to be a range cow who refused to learn the ways of men, so had to be traded off. In the meantime Jarvis Grant, Hudson's father, had gone back to Minnesota and brought up ten nice heifers from a good milk strain, so they started in to milk and make butter.

There were no fences so it was hard to keep the cattle from wandering too far, but there were quantities of feed, mostly pea vine and vetch which was good cattle feed, so the cows did well. Of course the milk all had to be set in pans or in cold water, to get the cream and then churned by hand in a big stone crock with a dasher. This all made a great deal of work for the women. The next problem was to get the butter to market in decent shape, especially in summer. They lived fifteen miles from town and had to drive a team of horses which took about two hours. On "Town Morning" there was a great rush getting the butter wrapped securely against dust, and the children were sent to the garden for an armload of rhubarb leaves to cover it to help keep it cool.

All produce was traded, not sold as we do today, so the butter was taken to the store and traded for tea, coffee, salt, soda and flour, etc. If you had more butter than you needed to pay for your groceries you got a credit slip. Cash was very hard to come by.

In 1902 there were a great many Indians living off the reserve. The flat in the river bottom where the Lewisville bridge now is, was filled with Indian houses and tents. There was a ford on the river so it was along a natural trail where the Indians moved back and forth from a small lake east of there to the reserve.

They had three children to go to school, and the nearest school was four and a half miles away. Mr. Grant made them a covered sleigh and they hitched up one of the big work horses, and the twelve year old boy was the driver. Often the roads were drifted and the weather very cold, so it was quite an ordeal, especially coming home after school. Although there was a barn of sorts at the school, the horses got cold standing all day and were anxious to get home, so it was hard to hold them. It was nothing new to round a corner too fast and topple them all out into the snow, sort of fun on a warm day but serious if it was very cold.

There was a lot of wild life here then. Many rabbits were caught with snares around hay stacks and along the river. They were used for meat and very happy the people were when they could catch one. There was an abundance of ducks, but the difficulty was to afford shells to shoot them. Manfred, the 12 year old boy, was shown how to load his own shot gun shells with black powder and shot, and soon learned to get two or three chickens or ducks in line before he shot. His job was to keep the family in meat. The second summer they were here they built a frame house on their land, Levi Evans place and later to Angus Ridge. A store opened at Lewisville

and moved into it in the fall. There was no insulation in the walls and the winter was very cold, so it was often below zero in the house in the morning.

Gradually they got some land broke and in crop. The grain grew very tall and was slow to ripen, but of a good quality and returned a high yield, but the price was very low; 16c per bushel for oats. They had to haul their grain to Wetaskiwin with horses which was a 30 mile trip which meant they had to start before sun-up in the winter and weren't home til after dark.



**Mrs. M. Grant on her beautiful riding horse in the early days**

Many a mile those men walked behind their teams to keep warm as the winters were much colder then. But they were young and happy and healthy and had a stake in the country. They bought CPR land for three dollars an acre — but it took a long time to pay for it.

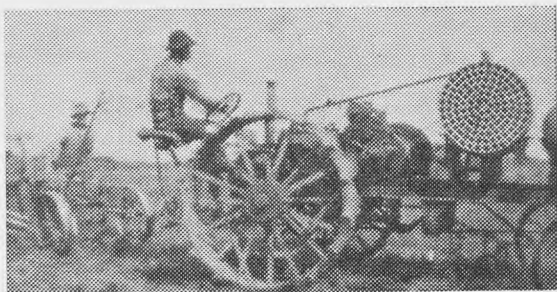
They often tell of the good times they had among themselves. They were all newcomers and anxious to get to know each other and so visited more than they do now. They also held dances in the school house when they would move out the stove and desks and the dance would begin. In summer they used an empty granary. People came for miles around, in sleighs in winter or democrats in summer, with a few lads on horseback.

Sometimes they would surprise a neighbour if he had a fair sized kitchen, large enough to hold one square for square dancing. Usually the kitchen stove had to sit outside for a few hours. None of these things seemed too much trouble.

And so life went on, and more land was brought under the plough, fences were built and roads straightened and graded, better buildings provided, with more schools and church services held in the school houses. The minister was often a student from college who took a pastorate for the summer months, as much for the experience, as for the help it might provide, in paying his way to college.

During their lifetime the Grants cleared and broke 320 acres of virgin soil, built a large house and barn and granaries, reared and educated their three children, took an active part in developing the neighborhood. Mr. Grant served as trustee for several years on the school board. This seems like a good contribution to the development of this province.

Helen became a teacher and is married now with four grown-up children. Her name is Mrs. Helen Hogan of Rumsey, Alberta. Bernice is Mrs. Al Mercer of Grande Prairie. She became a stenographer, and Manfred is still farming the land his father broke. Mr. Hudson Grant died March 1950, aged 87 years, and Mrs. Grant died January, 1957, at the age of 88 years, leaving their mark on a new and vigorous land.



**Manfred Grant at the controls of an early tractor**

## NOAH KRUEGER

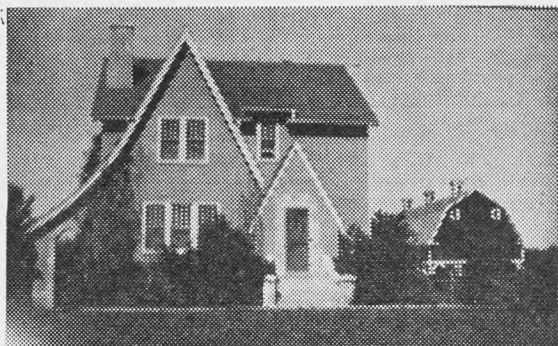
Noah and Annie Krueger were married in Kitchener, Ontario in 1902. Several years later Mr. Krueger got the urge to come west and find out for himself just what this part of the country was really like. He left his wife and small daughter, Dorothy in Kitchener while he came west, stopping first in Saskatchewan and working out as a farm hand. He apparently liked what he saw for he returned to Ontario, packed up bag and baggage and with his wife and daughter came back west, arriving in Wetaskiwin in 1906. He immediately bought a quarter of land (S.E. 20-45-23-W4) from Andrew Waterston who had homesteaded it.

On the place were a house, barn, large granary and a hen house. Mr. Waterston had obtained a carload of lumber from the east and had put up good warm buildings. The house was double boarded and was insulated with wheat chaff. The studdings were from long straight spruce, hewn square shaped. A well was near the house with the pump inside.

The barn was double boarded also, and again was insulated with wheat chaff. The original hen house was dug out with poles forming a V shaped roof and covered with sods. A good dug well was close to the road and was used for watering all the stock.

The original granary was moved by Mr. Krueger to its present location and a machine shed built on. A large barn 102' x 38' was built in 1915. This is still one of the best and largest barns in the Angus Ridge district. It was built by Paul Nieman and Paul's brother-in-law Fred Kochsmeier and Lou Deal. The cement work was all done by Klass Leeuw who was known for his fine stonework. The foundations and mangers were all built of concrete.

A few maples had been planted in the garden area by the Waterstons and these are still standing. Over the years the Kruegers have planted many



The new home built in 1934 by the Krugers

beautiful trees — willow, spruce, maple, elm, crabapple, Mountain Ash — to add to the beautiful setting of their farm home.

A lovely new home was built in 1934 when the old house was moved back to serve as a chicken house. The old house is still being used in this capacity. The Krueger family were noted for their methodical way of farming and their neat farm grounds and buildings.

Four daughters made up the family. The youngest daughter, Marjorie, with her husband, Art Wolters and two daughters Donna and Carol, took over the farm in 1947 when Mr. and Mrs. Kueger moved to Wetaskiwin where they built a new home. The Wolters, like the parents before them are very progressive and hard working citizens.

## THE ENGBLOOMS

The farm where Bert Engbloom now lives, S.E. 16-45-23-W4, was homesteaded by Ervin Abbot and later the Paul Brothers lived there too. They had built a log shack with a sod and straw roof and used the earth for a floor. The logs were large and the cracks between had been filled with mortar. The house boasted two small windows and one door. This house is still standing and is said to be the oldest building in the community.

In 1892 when the Dan McRae family arrived, they lived on this place for their first winter until they could get their own home ready to live in. Living in the old log house proved quite an experience, what with keeping out the small rodents and even trying to get a garter snake out, that sometimes slithered across the threshold.

This farm was eventually sold to the Woodrow family. They were a large family and with all the young people around in the community, life couldn't be dull, no matter how primitive things were. They built a more comfortable house but in 1918 they decided to sell and move to Monitor, Alberta. The farm was sold to Adolph Engbloom.

Adolph Engbloom was born in Sweden and had come to Canada, the land of opportunity, in 1914. He proved up on a homestead in the Buck Lake area and afterwards he went to British Columbia where he worked in lumber camps for about another three years. He then returned to Sweden and brought back his bride, Hilma to the Wetaskiwin district. They lived for a year on the Bert McRae farm in the Cherry Grove district, until they could build presentable living quarters on their own farm in Angus Ridge.

It was while living on the McRae place that their oldest child, Gustave was born. Mrs. Engbloom, being a stranger in a strange land, appreciated the neighbors who were so kind to her that first year. The Engblooms had three other children, Carrie, Bert and Enez. Gustave, the eldest, was in the navy and also graduated from the University of Alberta in Electrical Engineering. All the children received a first class education.

Today the youngest son, Bert and his wife Elvira and their family, Nora and Steven have taken over the farm. Mr. and Mrs. Engbloom moved to reside in a comfortable home in Wetaskiwin.

Bert and Elvira are good managers as the parents were before them and are a credit to the community in which they live.

All the barns, granaries, corrals and fences were built by the senior Engblooms. All the planting and landscaping was done by them. Being very industrious people they had a very comfortable home fixed up. Their home became well known for its hospitality and everything inside and out spoke of good management.

## FEN HUTCHINSON FAMILY

Fen Hutchinson sold his farm in Glendon, Minnesota, and decided to find a new home in Alberta. He arrived at Wetaskiwin with his family and bought the east half of 33-44-23-west of 4. Here they put up a good set of buildings overlooking the Battle River to the south. They had a family of two girls Mrs. Charlie Neison of Seattle, Mrs. Harry Freeman of Calgary, and a son Jarvis of Vancouver.

Mr. and Mrs. Hutchinson were good neighbors, and they worked hard to break up and farm this new land. When they left the farm about 1914 or 1915 practically all the tillable land was under cultivation. They moved to Wetaskiwin for a few years before going on to Vancouver, where they spent their declining years. When they passed away, each had reached the four score years.

Their son, Jarvis, remained on the farm until about 1919 or 1920 when it was purchased by Robert (Ralph) Cleland. The house on the farm of Mr. and Mrs. Cleland across the river had burned, and it was then that they bought the Hutchinson farm. The house on this farm burned, also, in 1926, but Mr. and Mrs. Cleland built again and they still live in that house today.

## THE ERIC BRANDT FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Eric Brandt came to Alberta from Sweden in the year 1903. They first took up a homestead in the Bruce area but in a few years sold it and came to Wetaskiwin to live. Mr. Brandt was a carpenter by trade so went to work as a builder. He helped build grain elevators at various places and also helped with the building of the high level bridge at Edmonton.

Mr. Brandt wasn't satisfied with his job as a carpenter in those early days. He didn't like the idea of living away from his home and family and the poor wages just weren't enough to buy food for the family and keep a home in town. He felt he could do better by taking his family to a farm where they would have more freedom and a healthier life.

In 1914 Mr. Brandt leased the S.E. quarter of 18-45-23-W4 from John Anderson who was retiring and was moving to Turlock, California. Mr. Anderson had bought this land from Axel Bengson who had homesteaded it in 1900. In 1918 the Brandts purchased the farm and made it their home.

They had a family of six children, Elsie, Esther, Edwin, Dave, Irene and Clarence. It was truly a happy family home. They were a credit to the Angus Ridge district and community. Many good times were had with the Brandts, as they were a very sociable and neighborly family. They took part in many social events that were held in the school during the season. They were also active members in the Swedish Baptist church of Wetaskiwin. They were a talented family who were always willing to provide music and songs for many social events.

As the years went by, one by one the young folks left home. Elsie trained and graduated as a nurse, later marrying Alvin Johnson, now of the Nashville district. Esther, now Mrs. Donald Sullivan lives in St. Paul, Minnesota. Edwin, now Rev. Brandt, is pastor of First Baptist Church in Madera, California. Dave was with the RCMP for some years and is now a detective with the CPR. Irene, Mrs. Dan Johnson, resides in Revelstoke, B.C. Clarence the youngest son, married Bette Archer of Kipling, Sask. in 1938. They rented the home place for seven years and in 1945 he bought the farm and his parents moved into Wetaskiwin to make their home.

Mr. Brandt, Sr. passed away in 1949 at the age of 75 years. Mrs. Brandt, Sr. passed away two years later at the age of 77. Clarence and Bette farmed until the fall of 1950 when they moved to Edmonton. They have rented out the land ever since and Clarence is now employed by G.W. Golden Construction Co.

## THE PETERSON FAMILY

Mr. and Mrs. Peter Peterson and family arrived in the Wetaskiwin district in 1903, having come from Idaho Falls, Idaho. The family consisted of one son, Art and three daughters, Ruby, Hattie and Bertha. They first lived on the Phil Nelson place and in 1909 purchased the quarter where the son Art still lives (N.E. 16-45-23-W4). They bought it from a Mr. Bobo who was a blacksmith in town at the time. Previous to that the quarter had been owned by the Ellis Brothers who had homesteaded it.

In 1912 the senior Mr. Peterson built a large two storey house in which Art and his family still live. Before they built the new home they lived in an old log house which is still being used today as a granary. Art and his wife, Sylvia live in semi-retirement on the farm while a son, Gordon with his wife and family live in another house on the same yard and carries on the farming operations.

The first Model T Ford in the district was owned by Pete Peterson in 1914. Son Art made their first radio. The model had only one tube but the first place that he got was the "Edgewater Beach Hotel" in Chicago.

Art has always been very clever with all hand crafts. He has done exceptional work in wood inlays, cabinet making and aluminum casting. This last work has enabled him to make a number of his own machinery repairs and parts. He has made his own wood planer and now has almost completed his own fanning mill. The many talents of the Peterson family have greatly enriched the neighborhood in which they live.



## THE C. O. JOHNSON FAMILY

Mr. C. O. (Charley) Johnson came to this country from Sweden in 1893 at the age of 12. His father had come out the year previous and had taken out a homestead in the Gwynne area. He later moved with his family to Wetaskiwin where he did carpenter work on several of the earlier buildings and homes.

In 1905 Mr. Johnson married Annie Stanwick, the same year that Alberta became a Province. They homesteaded on the Dorchester farm, now owned by Lloyd Shantz.

They celebrated their Golden Wedding Anniversary in November 1955, after living in the district for 53 years. They were the recipients of a lovely set of sheets and pillow cases, a gift from the Government of Alberta which was celebrating its Golden Jubilee that same year.

The Johnsons told many tales of the enormous number of coyotes in the early day. Packs of them would follow the buggy to town and the family dog would be so frightened that he would travel under the buggy. In broad daylight the coyotes would come out and hang around the farm buildings, waiting for a nice fresh chicken. To keep chickens, the settlers needed a six-foot fence.

Despite such drawbacks as these, the early pioneers persisted and eventually they overcame many of Nature's handicaps.

## THE FISHER PLACE

The N.W. 16-45-23 W4 quarter section of land across, and east of the old Bill Wilson farm, has seen many families move on and off. Billy Waterston homesteaded the land in 1892. The families, whom we have any record of residing there, were Waterstons, Russels, Wilson, Bellers and Fishers. The early post office in Angus Ridge was moved from the Bob Angus' to the Wilsons and finally to the Fisher place, where it remained until the rural mail delivery began in 1914. On the farm some of the original buildings are still standing, silent reminders of another day. The house, now in ruins was built of logs and finally covered with shiplap. Part of an old shed is still there.

It is said that many church services and prayer meetings were held in this house and people for miles around came on foot, horseback or by wagon or democrat to attend. It was quite a sight on Sunday afternoons, to see all the horses tied up to the rails of the corral.

Roy Ballhorn owned the property for 35 years but has recently sold it to Roma and Harold Simonson. Over this last period of time the land was used almost entirely for pasture and hay.

## S.W. 21-45-23 W. 4

This property was CPR land and in 1897 Duncan MacEachern bought it and began to put up some buildings. He had married one of the Waterson girls and they lived there for a few years. Norman, who now resides in the City of Wetaskiwin says he was perhaps three years of age when they left the district to move to Wetaskiwin, where they organized the MacEachern Milling Company. The family operated the mill until 1957 when it was sold to Mr. A. Hoyme.

The records show that the Ballhorn family bought the farm from a Mr. Weir, in either 1912 or 1913 and it has been in the possession of Roy Ballhorn ever since. Recently it has been sold to Roma and Harold Simonson and is used mostly for hay and pasture.

The Ballhorns sold the house to the Henry Hays in the Battle River District and they moved it to their farm and I believe it is still in use.

## THE RYAN PLACE

The two quarters lying west of the Krueger farm and Billy Wilsons S.W. 20-45-23-W4 and N.W. 17-45-23-W4 are now owned by Carl Krutzfeldt. He bought them from Ed Krause who likewise bought them from Mr. Miller Sr. (Herb Miller's father). While Mr. Miller owned it, his daughter and her husband, Mr. and Mrs. Reeves lived on the place. The buildings were on the  $\frac{1}{4}$  west of the Kruegers and located almost in the centre of the farm. Mr. Miller had purchased the farm from Wallace Ryan who had lived on it for some years. There has been no one living on this land for years and all traces of the building sites are gone.



Tilling the land in a big way was this early steamer with its mammoth equipment in tow.



Pride and joy of the afashionable traveller at the turn of the century was a smart horse and a good buggy.

## THE BALLHORNS

Mr. and Mrs. Claus Ballhorn came from Iowa, U.S.A. in 1910. They did not have to go far from the town of Wetaskiwin to buy a farm that had good black parkland soil. They bought a quarter (N.E. 20-45-23-W4) seven and one half miles from town in what is known as the Angus Ridge district. They purchased it from a man by the name of Snider who several years before had bought it from Bob Waterston. Mr. Waterston had proved up on the land as a homestead.

The Ballhorns had a family of five children. Their married son, Richard settled on land in the John Knox district. Their two married daughters, Mrs. Emil Recknagle and Mrs. Carl Krutzfeldt, with their families, bought farms not far from the parents. Frank and Roy managed the home place for their father.

The house was a log building and had been covered with board siding. The house is still in use as a chicken house. The Ballhorns added a frame addition that at present is in use as part of a tenant house. They built a few sheds to round out the farm set up.

The Ballhorns soon had the land under cultivation. They put up good fences and barns and did some improving each year. Mrs. Ballhorn, Sr., ordered several hundred young trees from Experimental Stations and had them

planted. Today they stand, full grown trees, a living monument of her foresight. Mrs. Ballhorn will also be remembered for the 'miles' of lace she crocheted, and gave to friends and relatives.

Roy and Frank owned one of the first cars in the district. They assembled it themselves from parts which they had gathered together from various places. They called it "The Old Reo."

In 1918 Roy married a girl who lived in Lacombe and whose birthplace had been Iowa too. Her name was Dora Staack. Roy's parents and Frank moved to another farm and Roy and Dora were on their own. That same year, Roy decided to go into registered Aberdeen Angus cattle. He purchased ten head and has ever since been an enthusiastic and successful breeder.

His herd has reached three hundred in number, but he tried to keep it below that if possible. He has sold cattle to breeders all over the U.S.A. and across the Dominion. He has purchased outstanding animals from the U.S.A. to add to his herd. At the time of the great Winnipeg flood, he purchased a heifer that was imported from Scotland. The money went for Winnipeg flood relief.

He has been prominent and active in all organizations connected with the cattle business, being a past President of the Canadian Angus Association, the Cattle Breeders Association as well as the Alberta Aberdeen Angus Association.

He served on the district school board for eighteen years, on the community Hall Board, was on the Municipal Council for five years and on the local Hospital Board. He was a director of the Co-op Store for many years and is a member of the Fish and Game Association and Chamber of Commerce. Late years he has been a Director of the Edmonton Exhibition Association and at present heads one of the Committees.

During the years he accumulated more land, the quarter N.W. 20-45-23-W4, to the south and east. Another quarter, known as the Felland place and a more recent one to the north and located in the Weiler district. During



Roy Ballhorn and Tom Cherrington display their "bag" on a hunting trip

the early days Roy fixed up a feed grinder on a sleigh or wagon and would go from neighbor to neighbor to grind feed. At times he would also do a job of wood sawing. These were long days when he was up long before daylight and back home after dark.

The couple lived in the old log house for seven years and in that time, Mrs. Ballhorn had the old house covered with vines and window boxes were filled with flowers. Finally a new house was built with the help of Charlie Sanddahl. When the house was nearly finished, a house warming was held when neighbors and friends gathered to initiate the new place.

One child, a daughter, Roma, was born to this union. She distinguished herself by first obtaining a first class teacher's certificate, then securing her B.Sc. degree in Agriculture at the University of Alberta. Later she obtained her Master's Degree on a Fellowship, at Ames, Iowa. Before going to University, Roma taught two years in the Weiler school. One year she was employed at the Experimental Station at Beaverlodge, Alberta, as assistant Horticulturist. Later she was employed for several years at the Lethbridge Experimental Station. She taught at the Composite High School in Red Deer and for a while at the University of South Dakota at Brookings. In 1950 she married Harold Simonson, who at that time was on the staff of the University of California, doing research work in Agricultural Chemistry. Harold had obtained his M.Sc. degree in Animal Nutrition from the University of Alberta.

Mrs. Ballhorn's mother, Mrs. Staack, lived with the family for 20 years. She became very devoted to the farm and its surroundings. She was a member of the Angus Ridge W.I.

Mrs. Ballhorn is noted for her love of flowers and gardens and is said to have a green thumb, when it comes to growing things. She has been convener of agriculture and Canadian Industries for the Angus Ridge W.I. for years. Her programs are original, interesting and different. She acted as Constituency Convener for two years. She has another hobby and that is writing. During the years she has hooked many rugs out of old materials. I am sure it is safe to say that she has hooked sixty of these practical and attractive mats.

In 1950 the family was honored by winning, from the Province of Alberta, the Master Farm Family Award. In 1955 Mr. and Mrs. Ballhorn left the farm to the care of their son-in-law and daughter, Harold and Roma Simonson, and retired to a comfortable home in Wetaskiwin. Roma and Harold have two daughters, Jody Ann and Lynne Marie. Just as Mr. and Mrs. Ballhorn, they are busy in many community activities and are actively engaged in the breeding of Aberdeen Angus cattle.



Roy Ballhorn with some of the ribbons and trophies won by his Angus cattle.

## THE CLELANDS

Mr. and Mrs. Ralph Cleland were both born in Kansas, U.S.A. After their marriage in 1906 they farmed for five years. It was there that two sons were born to them, the oldest dying in infancy. In 1910 they moved to Seattle where Mr. Cleland bought a grocery store. There a daughter, Gwendolynne was born. In 1912 Mr. Cleland sold his business and came to Wetaskiwin.

He purchased land which had been homesteaded by a man by the name of Jarvis but who had previously sold it to Mr. Hud Grant in the Malmo district. Mrs. Cleland and children came to join him in the spring of 1923.

Their land was next door to the Indian reservation and they had many experiences in the early days with the Indians. They were always begging something, bread, flour, tea or coal oil. Travellers often stopped for food and shelter on their way from Stettler to Wetaskiwin. If anyone was caught in a heavy rain storm the roads became impassable.

Mrs. Cleland joined the Angus Ridge W.I. the first year it was organized and is a life member. Many a time she rode on horse back or drove a team with a hay rack full of ladies to the meetings. She has won many prizes in handicraft for her beautiful quilts and rugs at the Institute Conferences.

After losing their first home by fire, they moved across the river to their present farm which was a CPR quarter previously owned by Mr. F. Hutchinson. Mr. Cleland has always had a pioneering spirit and says that if he ever moved again it would be still further north.

On the farm, resides their sons, Zene with his wife, Ruby and their two sons. The daughter Gwen is Mrs. Ralph Angus and lives on a nearby farm.

## CLARENCE DYBERG

Clarence Dyberg, the oldest son of Mons Dyberg has been farming the N.W. 33-44-23 W4, once owned by the Anguss. He is a good farmer and manager.

In 1954, he married Gwenn Lofgren of the Nashville District. They have one son, Hal, who is two years of age.

Recently they built a fully modern ranch style house. No doubt they will contribute their share towards community life in the district.

## THE UNDERWOODS

The Underwood family lived for years on the quarter section of N.W. 21-45-23-4 directly east, across from where the Harold Simonsons now live. They were a large family of boys and girls. While they lived in the community life was gay and merry for everyone. When they left, they scattered to far away places. Today only a few families still hear from some of the Underwood family.

The house they lived in was located near the southern boundary of the farm and only a few out buildings went to make up the farmstead. Today the buildings have all been removed and there is only a poplar bluff where they once stood. Mr. Underwood sold the land to Mons Dyberg and some years later Carl Krutzfeld bought it and now in 1959, is the present owner.

## THE WEST QUARTER

The N.W. quarter section of 20-45-23-4 which is spoken of as Roy Ballhorn's west quarter, was a homestead taken up by one of the Waterstons. Then it was sold to J. S. Schriefels. Joe Schriefels moved a house on to the place from town and had it rebuilt and refinished inside. He then brought his bride, Meta Hebert, who was a milliner in Wetaskiwin, to the farm. Here their two sons, Herbert and Bob, were born. Not being farmers by nature, the Schriefels sold the property to Roy Ballhorn and moved back to Wetaskiwin. Roy still owns this property. Several families lived in the house before it was moved to the Ballhorn's home quarter. Among those who lived there were the Wolters, Bellers, Hibbs.



## **MRS. RALPH ANGUS**

The quarter of land where Gwen Angus and family are living is the S.E. 17-45-23-W4 and this property has changed owners several times in the last fifty years.

Mr. J. Lake bought it as CPR land and built a makeshift house where he lived for awhile. He paid three dollars an acre for the land.

Mr. E. Girling, who was then living on the Ed Wilson place broke the first land that was on the farm. It was said to be three acres.

In 1910 Mr. and Mrs. J. H. Anderson bought the land and moved from the John Arnola farm in the Cherry Grove District where they had lived for several years.

Mr. Anderson was a minister and Mrs. Anderson did home nursing in the district. She was a very small person, weighing only ninety pounds. They had a family of seven children. Mrs. Anderson was the first President of the Angus Ridge W.I.

The Andersons sold the farm in 1919 to Herb Miller, after having built a fine new home. Sometime after the Millers were living there the house burned down. A temporary house was fitted up for the Miller family to live in. The Millers had a large family and the children attended Angus Ridge School. Mrs. Miller is a Past-President of the Angus Ridge W.I.

The Clarence Rix's moved onto the farm when the Millers left and built a new house. They lived there for several years.

Ralph Angus bought the farm from A. J. Rix in 1949. Ralph passed away very suddenly several years ago, leaving his wife Gwen and two children, Jim and Lorraine to carry on.

Gwen Angus joined the Angus Ridge W.I. before she was married and was very good at making quilts. One of these was so outstanding that it was sent to Scotland as an exhibit at the Edinburgh Fair.

## **THE FRYBORT FAMILY**

The first settlers who bought the east half of Section 19-45-23-W4 in 1898 were Mr. and Mrs. Herman Tost. They later sold the land to Dr. Schriefels who had come over here from the U.S.A. to buy land, in preparation for his brother and family who were still in Germany. Dr. Schriefels then went back to Germany for a year, to further his studies in a special course in Medicine. Then in 1906 he brought his brother William and family over to make their home in Canada. They leased the land from the Doctor, who then went back to the U.S.A. to resume his practice.

The William Schriefels farmed the land until in 1921 they bought a place of their own and moved there. The land was rented out to numerous tenants for quite a number of years.

Mr. Stanley Frybort, the present owner, came to Canada from Czechoslovakia in 1924. He first worked at various trades and jobs in Eastern Canada. Then in 1927 he came to Wetaskiwin, Alberta and worked in the Haultain district, where he and his wife farmed for some years. In 1937 Mr. and Mrs. Frybort bought the place from Dr. Schriefels. During the years from 1922 to 1937 George Owen of Wetaskiwin, an old timer and friend, looked after Dr. Schriefel's business here. It was through him that the deal was made and the land sold to Mr. and Mrs. Frybort.

The Fryborts have proven themselves good farm people and good neighbors in the community. They have worked hard to produce the means with which to improve their place. They have planted shrubs and trees for shelter. A few years ago they also had the electric power installed to make for better living in the home. The Fryborts have four charming daughters. Three of them are married and have families of their own. The youngest daughter is at home, and is in high school at the present time.

## THE G.P. OWEN FAMILY

The J. Knight family homesteaded the N.E. quarter of section 6-45-23-west of 4 in 1900. They lived there for a number of years and finally sold to Tom Ward in 1905. The land lay very close to the Indian Reserve and the people who lived on this particular place could tell many interesting stories of their contacts with the Indians.

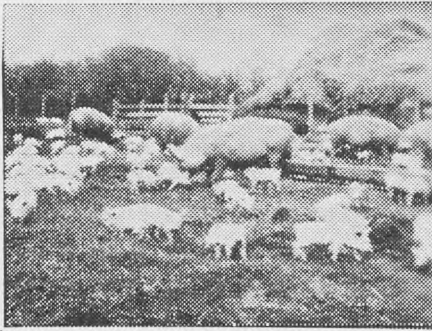
In 1907 the Wards sold to Mr. and Mrs. Reed and they lived there until 1915. Then the Bushell family bought it and they lived there only a few years, when the Soldiers Settlement board, took over the land.

Ernie Girling, bought the land from the board in 1920, when he returned from overseas, after the first world war. He farmed the land for a number of years but finally let it go back to the board.

In 1934, Mr. and Mrs. George Owen moved to the district from Wood River, Ponoka, where they had lived for six years. The Owens were of Welsh descent, both coming from Northern Wales in 1928. So they decided to buy the quarter section which had changed ownership so many times, from the Soldier Settlement board, who controlled it again.

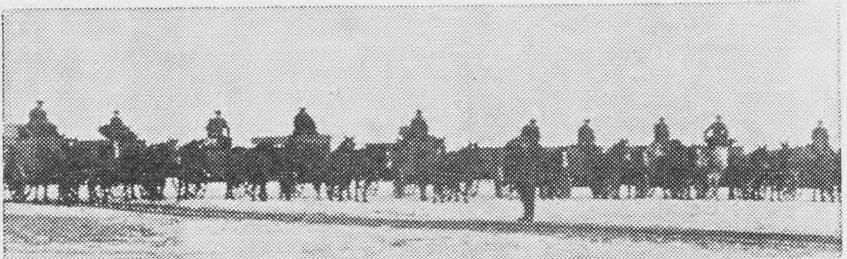
The Owens have worked very hard and gone through many hardships during the 15 years since taking over the land. It was very run down and crops were poor, due to hot and dry seasons in the early thirties. They have been quite successful in their efforts of farming. In 1949 they bought the south quarter, joining their home place — S.E. quarter of 6-45-23-west of 4.

This land had been homesteaded by Charlie Heron in 1900. He soon left and then a family by the name of Shane lived there for a number of years. Then the Gross brothers bought it as a speculation and rented it out to various parties. In 1921 Mr. and Mrs. William Schreifels bought the land from Gross' and made it their home for a number of years. Both the Schreifels passed away in 1932, then one of their sons, Nick, took over the farm for awhile, until Gross' took it over again. Doug Richards bought it in 1944. Doug and his parents lived there several years when Doug took seriously ill and passed away, willing the property over to his brother Allan.



Pigs out to pasture

After so many owners and changes of this land Mr. and Mrs. Owen now own the two quarters. They are doing a good job of farming the land. Credit must be given to them for their determination to make a go of it and their success in their efforts has paid off. They went into raising cattle and hogs and have done well in their venture. They have one son Leonard, who married Joan Lendross and they have two young daughters. Leonard and his family reside in Wetaskiwin and he is employed at the Wetaskiwin Sales and Service.



An early wagon train organized to haul district hogs to market

## THE OLD PLACE

The other day I was driving in the country and decided to go into one of our farms, which has been called the "Fisher place" for years.

It is now truly a ghost yard only a few rickety buildings left standing, silent reminders of days gone by. I got out of the car and explored a bit. The house built of good sized logs had been morticed together. No windows or doors were left, only the openings where they had been. It's strange how windows and even doors disappear from a vacant house. I counted two window and two doors spaces, with a small window in each gable of the upper storey. The building having had no tenants for years, was gradually falling apart, piece by piece. The stairs, still showing some grey paint had fallen into the hole which must have been the cellar. I could see that plaster had been used between the logs to fill the cracks. Whitewash had been put on the walls and ceiling at one time, probably to keep down the bed bugs, which thrived in log houses in those days. There was evidence too of paper and cotton cloth covering the walls, shreds of which still clung to the wood. Pigeons now roosted on the high ridge pole and evidently resented my sudden appearance. A broken cupboard lay among the ruins, along with other rubble.

The outside of the house had been covered with shiplap boards and shingles and showed a trace of paint. I could still see a bit of the path leading away from the house to the old dug well site, where the water was pulled up in pails. Further to the north were two sheds made of good sized logs. They too were falling apart but the evidence was there to show the hard work that had gone into the building of them. I wondered as I stood there, of the beautiful trees these logs had once been, and what stories they could tell if they could speak.

There were signs too of where a corral had been and the old trail leading away to the road.

I know large families had lived in the house at different times. No doubt the women tried to make the best of what they had. The windows very likely had some kind of curtains that had been used first in their homes elsewhere and probably geraniums bloomed on the window sills. The floor, I could see had been of rough wide boards but there were signs still left of pieces of linoleum that had been used.

In this house the cooking was done, family sewing and all the job there is to be done in a household. Here children were born and sickness in the family was nursed with home nursing and home medicines. Visiting was done and enjoyed so much and often even a dance on a Friday night. On Sunday afternoons religious services were held, when people assembled from miles around, on foot, horseback, buggy or wagon. The corral fence was surrounded with horses tied to the rails.

Over to the southwest I thought I could still see signs of where the garden must have been, in fact, I wondered if the daisies which I found there hadn't been planted many years ago. A natural growth of poplar trees sheltered the old place. In this grove was still the ruins of one of the most necessary buildings of the settler. It was the back house, or out house or privy or toilet or whatever name you gave it. Backhouse, although not so genteel sounding, was perhaps the most appropriate, for the building was always to be found to the back of the house. Those were the days when one had to shovel a path through the snow to get there and a huge snow drift away from the door. Other times it might be pouring rain, but no matter how the weather a well worn path, showed the importance of this building. Today, most dwellers of the land have their own water systems and the toilets in the house, where the elements cannot bother.

I walked to my car, my emotions hard to explain. I know I have more respect than ever for those who put up with things and never complained so that we can enjoy all the conveniences at hand today.

—Dora Ballhorn

## BATTLE RIVER DISTRICT

The Battle River District is bounded on the south and on the east by the Battle River. The west boundary is the road known as the "Stettler Highway" which borders on sections 3, 10, and 15 of 45-23-W4. To the north, the boundary is the northern sides of sections 15, 14 and 13 of 15-45-23-W4.

The Battle river is not very wide, but it is known to have some quite deep holes. In the spring, following a wet year and a winter of heavy snow-fall, the river has often been a very wild and deep-running current of water. The break-up at the Lewisville bridge, especially, has often been quite a sight. Huge cakes of ice and wildly-flowing streams have filled up the whole river-bottom on either side of the bridge, and the bridge itself has often been damaged. A new bridge is now being constructed.

The river has been the "swimming hole" for the community since the first settlers arrived. Many have been the berry pickers, too, who have tramped through the trees and underbrush in search of wild fruit such as saskatoons, raspberries, choke-cherries, cranberries, and black and red currents. In the early years strawberries were very plentiful on the high land in the district.

The land is mostly quite flat with a gradual incline towards the east. The majority of the land has now been cleared of trees (poplar and Balm of Gilead) and willow bush, with still the odd groves of trees and patches of brush left. There is a good topsoil of black loam except on the very numerous gumbo areas. This gumbo is a type of clay and raises good crops only under very ideal conditions. It remains wet longer in the spring and, if the summer is dry, the ground bakes hard. This type of soil can be much improved if manure is liberally applied for several years.

Before the roads were given a topping of gravel, this gumbo was a terror to motorists, for, as soon as the roads became wet, they were not only slippery but often impassable. The gumbo sticks to the wheels and lifts up, plugging up the running gear until all motion is stopped. Before the age of the automobile this same gumbo acted in the same way on horse-drawn vehicles. To step out into the mud meant that one's feet lifted up with pounds of the sticky mess practically glued to the shoes. All roads in the district are gravelled now with the exception of about two and a half miles.

For the past 10 years the farmers have been blessed with electricity supplied by the Calgary Power Company. This has made it possible for the homes to be as completely modern as the city dwellings. Although natural gas lines are not far away, the cost of piping it in makes it prohibitive at the present time.

Water has not been a great problem in this district. Lots of hard water can be reached at sixty to eighty feet, but most of the soft water wells are drilled down to about 180 feet. Now that electric motors pump the water the old wind-mill towers and gasoline engines have vanished, just as the old bucket on a rope disappeared with the dug wells years ago. Now it is the T.V. aerial that one sees glistening in the sun above the house.

If the pioneers of this district could see how we live today they would surely say that times have changed and progressed in the Battle River District.

## PIONEER DAYS IN THE BATTLE RIVER DISTRICT

It was in 1891 that the Canadian Pacific Railway was completed from Red Deer to Edmonton, but only one train a week crossed over its tracks for a long time. The present city of Wetaskiwin was a stopping place but the only building there was a freight shed where settlers and their effects were unloaded. Settlers were very few at that time.

In 1892 Christian Shantz and his family, including his married daughter, Mrs. Charles Nelles, her husband and daughter moved into the Battle River District from South Dakota. The Latimer family had arrived the year before, and at about that time the Todds, Whitfords and LaRoques lived along the river. The Dowswell family arrived a few months later.

Everyone was kept busy cutting and hauling logs for building. The earliest buildings had dirt floors and sod roofs. The people generally were a happy sociable lot and all were good neighbors.



Roads were buffalo paths until about 1900 and transportation was by horseback and wagon. The only resemblance of a road was the ox-cart trail from Winnipeg to Edmonton. (A portion of this trail crossed our farm, the William Nelles farm, and can still be discerned today.)

The settlers soon broke up the open patches and grew seed and feed. There were no markets for anything.

October 15th, 1892 saw the first snow fall which remained until very late the next spring. The snow was at least four feet deep all winter. Farmers hauled seed grain from Wetaskiwin on sleighs May 15th, 1893.

This part of the country was suffering from drought at that time. The sloughs were all dry and hay was cut on them. There was no upland hay. Later the wet years came and then the sloughs all filled up. Hauling seed flour and supplies was then a big problem too. Streams had to be forded and occasionally horses were lost in the current. Often wagons had to be unloaded and bags of grain, flour and other supplies carried across impassable stretches, as it was all the horses could do to pull the empty wagons.

For a long time the people had to get along the best they could on their own resources as there were no doctors, nurses and for a time no teachers or ministers. In 1894 the Battle River School was built. It was one of the earliest in this area. The seats were made of rough lumber. Later in the 1890's ministers came out this way. They usually travelled on horseback and often did not stop long in one place. One of the first held services at Duhamel and at Battle River. The Charlie Nelles home was the boarding place of many of the teachers and ministers.

The first post office was at Bear's Hill which was then located west of the present Bear's Hill School, across the railroad tracks. Later Robert Angus had the Post Office on the old Levi Evans place and when he moved to town the Post Office was situated at Angus Ridge.

The Indians still roamed the country — not too pleased at the invasion by the whites. They often set fires and burned the dry grass and hay and many of the settlers were very much afraid of them. Mrs. Nelles was especially terrified of them and they delighted in following her when she ran at the sight of them. One day she saw them coming, and carrying Mary and dragging Nellie by the hand, she ran all the way to the Wallis home, the present Hay farm. Her young brother, William Shantz was with her. She had told him to lock the door when they left, which he did, but he left the key in the lock. The Indians followed them on their ponies, but did not offer to molest them. By that time the North West Mounted Police were here and the Indians held much respect for them. For a time after they arrived in 1894 the North West Mounted Police were stationed at the home of C. Shantz.

Food was often scarce in those days. If they were fortunate enough to have a cow, settlers made their own cheese and butter. They would make butter into rolls of ten to twelve pounds. Wheat was taken to Edmonton and exchanged for flour, the trip taking four days and often the weather was down to 40 below zero. Luckily rabbits and prairie chickens were plentiful, and they made up a large part of the diet. There were lots of berries and strawberries were so plentiful the wagon tires would be red from passing over them.

One evening Mr. Vaughn, father of the late Mrs. H. J. Montgomery came past the Shantz home leading a cow he had bought. He wished one of the boys to help him take it across the river to his home. Josiah went to help him. On the other side of the river Mr. Vaughn gave him a quarter, which, when he showed it to his father, turned out to be a twenty dollar gold piece. He was made to return it next day. It had been dusk and Mr. Vaughn had not noticed his mistake. He had been railroading in the U.S.A.



A walking plow at work in the field in 1904

### THE LATIMERS

Mrs. Latimer was the first white woman to live in the Battle River area. She arrived in the year 1891 and lived there a year without seeing another white woman.

She and Mr. Latimer came into the country by way of Fort Macleod and Calgary, with their worldly goods packed in a two-wheeled cart drawn by a couple of ponies. A little girl child completed the family. As they drove along, northward from Calgary, the whole world seemed theirs, to choose a place to settle. The wagon trail meandered here and there, over hill and dale, over creeks and twice forded rivers. Sometimes they encountered other travellers and tall tales were then exchanged.

They cooked their food over the open fire and slept beside the wagon where they fixed a sort of tent. They finally decided to settler near the banks of the Battle River on the S.W. quarter of Section 1-45-23, not too far from where the first Battle River school was later built.

Mrs. Latimer was just a slip of a girl, small and dark and full of life and eager to absorb all that this new country had to offer. Their first neighbors were half breeds and Indians, the former had squatted along the river. One family, the La Roques lived there for years. Their home was a sod shack with a dirt floor and a ridge pole held the structure in place. From this pole hung various things such as dried and smoked meats and bags of dried berries besides clothing and various other things.

Mrs. Latimer spoke of her friend Mrs. Shantz who came to live not far away in the following year. This lady was known later on as Grandma Schantz and her husband as Grandpa to the large family they reared and to many others as well.

Can you imagine with what joy this young person welcomed the acquaintance of another woman? They travelled to and fro on horseback or in a wagon, later in a buckboard. There were no roads, just trails winding hither and yon. Wild flowers grew in profusion and never did they see a weed. Many a buffalo skull was found as they travelled the prairie. Today a skull would be considered of interest and value — then they were kicked aside and scarcely noticed.

Here her children were born. The first year they were sixty miles away from a doctor and the nearest railroad was at Calgary. This woman kept house under all sorts of difficulties and really endured hardships at times but still took time to observe the beauty of nature all around her — the winding river, the hawthorn bushes, the high bush cranberries, the hill-sides purple with crocuses in the spring and the sweet smelling silvery willow. The yellow buffalo beans were a yellow carpet for awhile every spring. There were rabbits hopping everywhere, snow white in the winter and grey in the summer. They often used these for food and as deer were plentiful

they were usually well supplied with meat. There were squirrels and chipmunks and weasles. The sly coyotes made the young girls' blood chill as they howled and howled on a moonlight winter's night. There were prairie chicken and partridge, plentiful and almost tame, especially if the winter was hard. Ducks were not as plentiful, for some reason as they seem to be now — perhaps it was the grain fields that brought them in later on.

There was fuel to gather to keep the cold out and the warmth in. It seems that Mrs. Latimer did her share of gathering this together, especially while the man of the place was hunting or fishing. She would take her cayuse and with some contraption of her own planning would sally forth, a baby or two fastened in a sort of hammock tied to the shafts. She would gather up dried willow and poplar wood, of which there was plenty, tie it with a rope and the pony would drag it along to the sod shack which was home. There it had to be chopped into fire wood.

She speaks kindly of the half breed women who were her nearest neighbors and she perhaps learned many things from them. Wild fruit was abundant too, strawberries, saskatoons, raspberries and cranberries. What did she do with the children while she picked the wild fruit, you modern mothers may ask? Well, she had to make a way or find it, as the fruit had to be picked if they wanted any, come what may. In the fall the woods along the river were a mass of flame color and pungent with the smell of cranberries.

She says that finally there was a store at Bears Hill operated by McDonald and Ramsey. It took them a good day to go there and back when they went for provisions. They went in the wagon jiggedy-jog, jiggedy-jog over the bumps of the prairie trail.

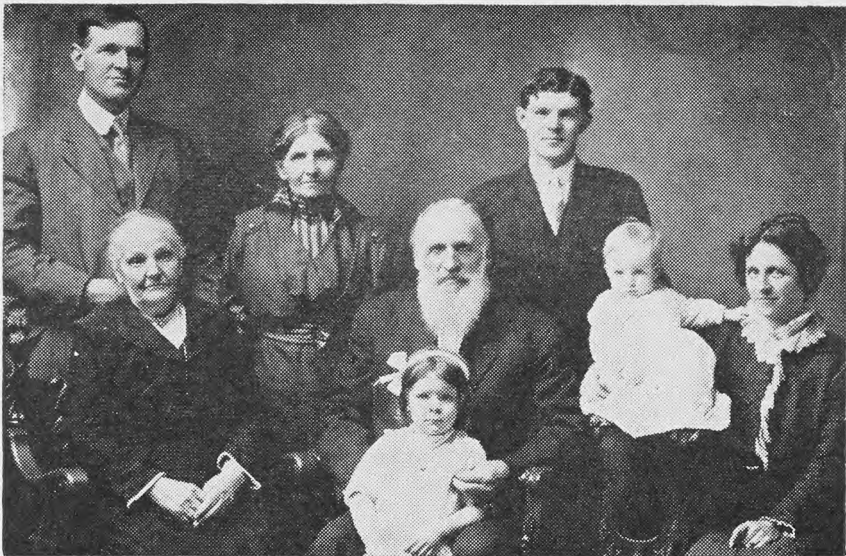
One of the greatest problems of the early days was drinking water. Wells had to be dug and the water pulled up with buckets.

Horses and dogs seemed to be the first domestic animals acquired by the early settlers. Sometimes horses wore bells and were generally hobbled when out on grass. Dogs were not only companions and gave the alarm when anything unusual approached but kept the small rodents away. Mice were a pest and bed bugs thrived in the logs which were used for the houses. Mosquitoes were terrible and only small smoke fires in front of the building could keep them away.

These people as they gazed across the prairies, could not see the lights in other windows, or count the smoke coming from the neighbor's chimneys as we can, but they had a contentment that we do not enjoy today. In a little talk which Mrs. Latimer gave us one day at a W.I. meeting she said "We had everything to choose from and we might have done better but I have no complaints. After our experiences I do appreciate the convenience and better conditions of life which followed."



The styles of 1909. Note the variety of men's hats



The Christian Schantz family showing four generations

### THE SCHANTZ FAMILY

Christian Schantz was born in Kitchener, Ontario. There he met and married May Hutchison who had come from Scotland. Later they moved to the United States, settling for a time in Kansas before moving to Scotland, South Dakota. In June 1892 Christian and his son Josiah made a journey to Alberta, following the eldest son, Benjamin, who had set out in March on the same route. Arriving at Wetaskiwin, they found that Ben had just recovered from an illness of three months with inflammatory rheumatism. He had been cared for by a Mr. and Mrs. Smith who lived in Wetaskiwin's only building, a freight shed.

After looking over the country, Christian and Josiah, filed on a homestead and built a log house on S.W. 12-45-23 West of the 4th. In September they returned as far as Winnipeg to meet other members of the family and four carloads of settlers effects. The remainder of the family came by train on tourist cars. In Winnipeg, Mr. Schantz bought a democrat, to become the first and only democrat in this area for some time. The whole family arrived and began to get settled, only to have a very heavy snowfall in October which lasted until the following May.

At the time of their arrival, Mr. and Mrs. Schantz had ten living children, some of them grown and married.

The Schantz family were perhaps more fortunate than many who came to the "Wild West," for they were not destitute as were many who came. They had sold a half-section in South Dakota before moving. The family were noted for being kind-hearted and Mr. Schantz often gave some wheat or some of whatever he had to those less fortunate. A man and his wife across the river were in dire straits and often he helped them. They lived in a sort of dug-out on the side of a little hill.

The Schantz door was always open to any stranger who needed a stopping place, and an extra place or two at the table was the rule rather than the exception.

The years that followed were years of happiness, trial and hardships, as they, along with other first settlers in the area gradually hewed a civilization out of this unbroken territory. The children gradually all married and moved to homes of their own and Mr. and Mrs. Schantz finally gave up farming and moved to Wetaskiwin to spend their declining years. Mr. Schantz passed away early in 1929 and his wife followed him within two weeks.

Other members of the family lived on the farm before their son, Christian bought the old homestead from them and farmed it but did not live on it.





**A sod-roof log shack owned by Wm. Schantz.  
Bill and Mose Oesch rest in the doorway at noon hour**

He, in turn, sold it to his son, Homer, who farms it to this day. A number of years ago Homer moved the building spot from a grove of trees near the centre of the farm to the north-west corner where he built a new house, and moved the old house over to become a barn.

Today only three of the Christian S. Schantz Sr. children are living, James R. of Camrose, William and Walter both of Wetaskiwin, but there remain a great many descendants of this pioneering family of the west.

Many of the family now spell the name Shantz.

### **CHRISTIAN R. SCHANTZ FAMILY**

Christian R. Schantz, son of Christian Schantz, who homesteaded in the Battle River district in 1892, came with his parents at that time. His elders used to tease him about the trip from South Dakota. As most young boys would, he wanted to come on the freight train with the men and all their settlers' effects. They told him he must not let the officials at the Canadian border see him on that train, or they would send him back. So he hid in a large wooden barrel until the border and the officials were far behind.

When he grew up he married Blanche Howie. They lived at Highland Park (near Edberg) for a time before moving back to the Battle River District. They finally settled on S.E. 10-45-23-W4, which had been homesteaded by an older brother, Josiah Schantz. They also purchased the west half of S.W. 11-45-23-W4 and the N.E. 3-45-23-W4.

They raised seven children, Walter, (now deceased) Homer, Leslie, Lloyd, Mary, Joy, Verna and Wilfred (Mac), two of whom still live in the Battle River District. Homer has the Grandfather Schantz homestead and Wilfred lives on the home place. The quarter to the south was once owned by a brother, Lloyd, but it now belongs to Art Bolton.

The Battle River School had been built on the N.E. 3-45-23-W4 in 1894 and was just across the fence from Chris' buildings. For 23 years he served as Secretary-Treasurer of the school board and he was also Councillor for this division in the Municipal District of Wetaskiwin for 14 years.

Chris and Blanche sold out in 1946 and moved to Wetaskiwin, and Chris passed away in 1949. Mrs. Schantz still resides in the city. Wilfred is on the home-place where he built a new house several years ago. He and his wife, Dora, have three children, Ronald, Maxine and Danny.

### **JAMES SCHANTZ FAMILY**

James R. Schantz arrived here with his parents in September of 1892 and he took up homesteading on N.E. 2-23-45-west of 4 in the Battle River district.

He married Elizabeth (Lizzie) Snyder and to them were born seven children, Gertrude, Netta, Beulah, Myrtle, Dorothy, Alvin and Melvin.

Jim bought the S.E. 11-45-23-W4 and the east half of S.W. 11-45-23-W4. The latter sold to the Boltons.

They sold out to Mr. and Mrs. E. Kakoschke in 1950 and moved to Camrose, where they still reside. Netta, Myrtle and Dorothy live in Edmonton.

(See note below)

NOTE: Just as we complete the writing of this book, word has been received that Mr. James R. Schantz passed away at St. Mary's Hospital, Camrose on April 9, 1959.

## THE NELLES FAMILY

Charles Nelles was one of a large family born in Bruce County, Walkerton, Ontario. The family later moved to Chicago and then on to Scotland, South Dakota. There, Charlie married Susanna, daughter of Mr. and Mrs. Christian Schantz. In September, 1892 they arrived at Wetaskiwin along with the Schantz family. They filed on a homestead, the location of which was N.E. 10-45-23-4th which was one and one half miles from the Schantz homestead.

There they lived and raised a family of six children, Nellie (Mrs. Albert Beller), Mary (Mrs. E. Edwards and following his death, Mrs. Roy Dale), Charles (who passed away in 1923), William, Alvin and Kenneth. William (Bill) married Freda Scharff, Alvin married Lola Dugger and is now married again, and Kenneth married Elsie Elgert.

As the family grew, Charlie acquired more land which the boys bought over when they were married. In 1929, Bill and Freda started farming the S.E. 15-45-23-4th which had been purchased from the CPR. A year later Alvin and Lola set up farming on the N.W. 11-45-23-4 which quarter formerly had been owned by John Hauptert, but not lived on. Kenneth and Elsie moved to the N.W. 10-45-23-4th in 1934 which had formerly been owned by a Mr. J. P. Ross in Calgary. Bill and Freda still live on the farm. Alvin and Lola moved to Wetaskiwin in 1946 and Alvin later sold the farm to Mrs. H. F. Hay. It is now owned by Edward Hay. Kenneth and Elsie moved to town in 1945 but they still own the farm which is being farmed by Bertil Engbloom.

The old homestead was farmed for a number of years by grandson Lester Beller. Following their move to Cranbrook in 1956, they rented to Edward Kokas, and now Edward is buying the place, and lives there with his wife Carol and baby daughter Katherine.

Charles Nelles passed away in 1936 and Susanna followed in 1942. They had seen much hard work, poverty, sickness, death, crop failures, livestock losses, drought and depressions, but they were always ready to help a neighbor, and they always enjoyed a good time when it presented itself.

## WILLIAM NELLES

William (Bill) Nelles married Freda Scharff, who was born and raised near Millet. The Scharffs homesteaded west of that town in 1900. They had a family of seven children and Freda was the fifth child. She became a teacher and taught school in the Battle River School, southeast of Wetaskiwin for two years. While there she met Bill and they were married in 1929.

Freda and Bill Nelles took over the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  15-45-23-W4 from Bill's father in 1929. When they arrived there, after they were married, there was nothing but bare land, without any buildings whatever. About 60 acres of land was broken, the remainder was quite brushy. There was plenty of work for the young couple to do. First a two-roomed house was built. Later on other rooms were added. Barns and sheds were built as quickly as possible. This young couple really started from "scratch". Livestock was acquired little by little as soon as the money became available.

For the first years there wasn't a well on the place and the water for the house was carried from the Nelles farm across the road. The livestock also had to be driven across the road to water. Bill has been a director of the Angus Ridge Community Hall for years.

Freda taught school at Haultain for three years, driving a car or riding to and from the school every day.

Through their hard work they have built up a nice comfortable home and are a credit to the community in which they live. Freda Nelles is a member of the Angus Ridge W.I. and has acted as President and Secretary for that organization. She also served as President of the Wetaskiwin Agricultural Society for five years. Under her supervision the Fair really came to life.

## THE DOWSWELL FAMILY

It was November 7, 1892 when my father, John Dowswell, my brother Tom and I arrived in Wetaskiwin from Woodville, Ontario, the trip taking 11 days and costing about \$40.00. Wetaskiwin at that time consisted of the depot with a boarding house at one end. We had brought with us four horses, one cow, a sow, some chickens, and some machinery, which was not of much use in this area.

The first night we stayed at a boarding house and the following morning set out with all our possessions to what is now the Battle River district. We went to the home of Christian Schantz and all his family, who had arrived earlier in the year. They already had up a log house and made us welcome. We stayed for a month and at times there were as many as twenty-two people there. Meanwhile we built a log shack on our own land, which housed us and our animals. The floor was dirt which packed so hard that it could be swept.

That first winter we lived almost entirely on bread, which was baked daily, using Royal Yeast Cakes. We went to town about once a month to buy flour, salt, sugar, spices, soap and other bare necessities.

The following spring we broke some land and planted barley, and a small garden. That year we put up hay which we cut in the sloughs. We were constantly on the alert for fires which usually came from the Indian Reservation and we had to plow fire-guards around the buildings to protect them.

We grew wheat in the following years and from this we had our own flour. Two or three neighbors would leave at midnight with teams and sleighs loaded with wheat and would arrive at Strathecona (now South Edmonton) that evening. The following day the wheat would be ground into flour and we would return home the next day. One trip usually produced enough flour to last for a year. At the turn of the century we were able to get our wheat made into flour in Wetaskiwin.

When we wanted meat, we did our own butchering, or we hunted prairie chicken, partridges, ducks and rabbits. Deer and moose were not plentiful. Later when we had more cattle we had buyers come to the farm and they bought them two or three months before shipping time. Later they would tell us the exact shipping date and we would drive them to Wetaskiwin. If we had hogs we butchered them in the winter and sold the dressed meat in town for about five cents a pound. We also sold some grain after we got more land cleared and broken.

The Indians lived on the reserves, but wandered about a good deal. They were quite friendly. The old settlers always said that they never locked their doors and the Indians did not steal, but in later years they learned some of the bad tricks of the white man and were not so trustworthy.

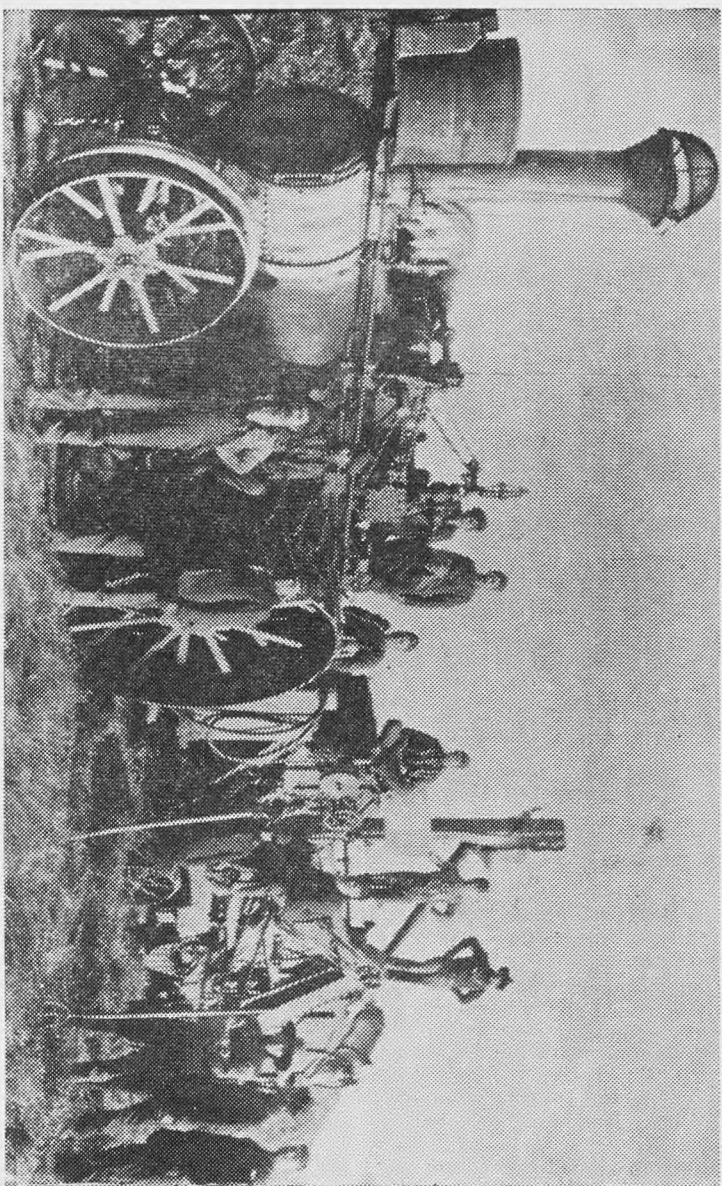
Tuberculosis was unknown among the Indians at first but, after contact with the whites, the disease ravaged the Indian tribes, and for a time it was feared they would be wiped out.

Our first threshing was done by a two-horse treadmill owned by the Waterston Brothers. Later they had a 12 to 14-horse run thresher.

The grain was first cut with a binder (the early ones were very crude affairs), stooked, stacked after curing, and then pitched into the thresher. There were no band-cutters or blowers on the first machines, so the twine binding the sheaves had to be cut away by hand, and the straw had to be pitched away by hand. This big 12-horse thresher was used for grinding grain after the steam outfits came out.

A man by the name of Harrison, from Dakota, brought the first steam threshing outfit into the country. It took 10 or 12 men to run this machine. The first big steam thresher came from the New Sweden district about 1899 or 1900. It was hand fed, but it had a blower. The next year they put a self-feeder on it. On the place now owned by Ernest Reeves, Mr. La Rose, in the 1890's, had a round corral. In this corral he put the unthreshed grain and his horses. He chased the horses around and their hoofs knocked the grain from the husks. The straw was forked out and the grain tossed about to get the chaff out.

Our mail came out to the Post Office at the home of Bob Angus on the



A 1909 threshing crew. Ed Dowswell stands by the tractor wheel, Tom Haigh on the tractor seat, and John Dowswell (with beard) on the separator.



about 1900 and we bought supplies there. Butter was 10 cents a pound. There were plenty of dried fruits to be had, but the only fresh fruit ever shipped into the country was apples.

Entertainment in those early days consisted of card parties and dances in the homes. Church services were also held in the homes until the school was built in 1894. Most of the ministers were Methodists, and these were usually students. One of these used a racing cart and a horse to travel about. One minister claimed he made the trip from Edmonton with a team of cayuses in five hours.

Oxen were used to farm with in the early days and Johnson Thirsk had a team of these, but they soon gave way to the horses, just as so many of those early-day articles and methods have given way to the modern trends of today.

### **THE JOHNSON THIRSK FAMILY**

Johnson Thirsk was born at Seaforth, Huron County, Ontario, in 1860. He married there and then he and his wife moved to North Dakota. In 1892 they came to Wetaskiwin and homesteaded on the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  2-45-23-W4 in the Battle River District. They had a family of three sons and two daughters, Hanlan, Ethel, Edgar, Vera and Gordon.

The early days here were hard for the Thirskes as they were for the other pioneers. Mr. Thirsk had no horses at first but used a yoke of oxen to break the land and to do the other farm work. They later bought more land across the road and next to the river, the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  36-45-22-W4 and the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  36-45-22-W4.

They remained on the homestead until the death of Mrs. Thirsk in 1932, then Mr. Thirsk moved to Wetaskiwin where he lived until his death at the age of 86.

### **EDGAR THIRSK**

Edgar married to Ethel Beller lived on the old home place until about 1937. They had four children while here, and two more were born to them later. They resided at Bonnyville and at Wainwright, before moving to Vancouver, B.C., where they now reside. Two children remain in Alberta, Donald, who has a locker storage plant at Barrhead and Gerald, who lives at Wainwright.

### **GORDON THIRSK**

Gordon joined the army during the latter part of World War 1 but was not in uniform very long. He taught school at Crooked Lake and somewhere near Gwynne as well. He married Katherine (Katie) Schriefels in 1929 and they settled on the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  36-45-22-W4. Later they moved to the N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  36-45-22-W4. Their home burned while they were living there. Katie used the scholarship won by the Angus Ridge Women's Institute to attend a weaving course at the Banff School of Fine Arts, and liked Banff so well that in 1947 she and Gordon moved there to make a new home.

### **ETHEL THIRSK**

Ethel married Thomas Haigh, who died in the early thirties. She now resides in Vancouver.

### **VERA THIRSK**

Vera married Lloyd Wilson and lived for many years north of Edmonton. They now make their home in that City.

### **ROGER CHERRINGTON**

Roger Cherrington with his wife, two daughters and two sons, came to settle in the district in 1893. They first lived by the Battle River but later moved to, and built up, the farm which is still owned by a member of the family — a later son, Robert.

Roger Cherrington was a rather colorful character in the district and lived to be an old man. He owned the first automobile (gasoline buggy) in the community and he was the terror of all the horse-driving people, especially the women. In those days, such a vehicle was looked upon almost as an instrument of murder. All horses were terrified at the sound and sight of the auto and it took a good deal of strength and courage to be on the same road with one.

## **THE HAIGH FAMILY**

Mr. and Mrs. John Haigh were both born in England. Before coming to Wetaskiwin and the Battle River district in 1903, the Haighs lived in Medicine Hat where they took part in the Riel Rebellion in 1886, and following that, at Cochrane and Morley where they ranched.

### **WILLIAM HAIGH**

William Haigh bought the N.E. 34-45-22-W4 where he lived for many years. He and Mrs. Haigh had two daughters. Later he developed a rare gift for photography and practiced that art here and at Coronation where they lived for a time. He left the farm and moved into Wetaskiwin in the 1920's and became night watchman for the Wetaskiwin Co-operative Association. He passed away in 1951.

His land had been owned first by a Mrs. Whitford and then a Felix Blanc before he bought it. A family by the name of Baker lived on it while the Haighs lived in Coronation. The land was later sold to Harry Grant and he, in turn, sold it to the present owner, Art Rix, who lives in the Bears Hill District.

### **THOMAS HAIGH**

Thomas Haigh married Ethel Thirsk and they farmed the S.E. 3-45-23-W4. They had one son, Edgar, better known as "Pat". The farm has been owned by several people since the Haighs left, but no one has lived on it. The present owner is Omar Graff.

Tom, after leaving the farm, moved to Coronation and went into the implement business there. He came back to the farm for a time before moving to Edmonton, where he died in the early thirties. His widow lives in Vancouver.

### **LAWRENCE ZIELKE**

Lawrence Zielke bought the N.W. ¼ 36-45-22 W4 from Gordon Thirsk. This quarter of land had originally been owned by a Mr. Todd and his family, then it was bought by Johnson Thirsk. Lawrence is the son of Mr. and Mrs. Ted Zielke, who farmed for many years, east, across the Battle River. Lawrence and his wife have four children.

### **ERNEST REEVES**

Mr. and Mrs. Ernest Reeves now live on the other quarter, the S.W. ¼ 36-45-22-W4, once owned by Johnson Thirsk. Previous to the Thirsk ownership, families by the names of LaRose, Greenwood and Murray all lived there for short periods of time. When Gordon Thirsk left that quarter, it was taken over by the Gross Brothers. Other families, Archie Larson, Bill Janzen and Ron Freisan were on the place for short periods of time before Mr. and Mrs. Reeves moved there in 1949 from east of Ponoka. They have one young son Ryan, who attends the Rosebriar school.

### **ELMER ZIELKE**

Elmer Zielke now owns the Johnson Thirsk homestead. Art Wolters bought the place when Edgar and Ethel Thirsk left. Art and his wife, the former Marjorie Krueger, lived there for a few years before moving to the Krueger farm. Omar Graff and his wife (nee Edna Zielke) bought the farm from Art and they, also, lived there only a few years, before moving to a better built-up place, near Ferintosh. They sold it to Edna's brother, Elmer. Elmer and his wife have four young children. At the present time the family are living in Edmonton.

## **THE NEWVILLES**

Mr. and Mrs. Roy Newville moved from the United States in 1910 and settled on a quarter of land along the Battle River S.E. 12-45-23-W4, which had belonged to the Potvin family. They remained in the district for quite a number of years before moving to Wetaskiwin. The land was sold to Jacob Wolters in 1923. Mrs. Newville later became Mrs. Lee Kelley of Wetaskiwin, and Ma-Me-O Beach. Mr. and Mrs. Kelley were killed in an auto accident on the Pigeon Lake Highway in 1959.

## THE WOLTERS FAMILY

Jacob Wolters had farmed in the Wetaskiwin area for some time before buying S.E. 12-45-23-W4 from Mrs. Newville in 1923. He bought another quarter of land directly across the Battle River as well.

Mr. and Mrs. Wolters had a family of 11 children, and they always welcomed visitors to their home. The hill leading from their house down to the river was the gathering place of the young people of the district for many years during the winter months when "Coasting" was the favorite sport. All types of sleds were used and many were the spills, but that was just part of the fun. There was often skating on the river, too. For many years there was a narrow swinging bridge over the river. It was quite a thrill to make one's way across it especially when the river was high, and even more so if human hands helped to make it swing from side to side. In the spring fishing from the river was another sport even though most of the fish were suckers.

During the years between 1926 and 1928 a disease which became known as "Swamp Fever" attacked many horses in the district and the Wolters family lost 27 head.

All through the years gravel was taken from the river for farm buildings throughout this whole area for miles around, and many of the buildings in Wetaskiwin have this Battle River gravel in their foundations. During the winter months strings of horse-drawn sleighs went up and down the road for long periods of time hauling the gravel from the river to the different farms in the area or to Wetaskiwin. The jingle of sleigh bells was an ever-present sound.

Mr. Wolters died about 1937 and Mrs. Wolters remained on the farm with some of the family until 1943. She had a sale and moved to Wetaskiwin. She passed away in 1949.

Different members of the family farmed the land until a son, Arthur, bought the place in 1951. No one has lived on the farm since.

In 1953 Art let out a contract to P. Muraca of Wetaskiwin for gravel pits on the farm. Especially during the summer trucks continuously haul gravel to Wetaskiwin for construction purposes. Art farms the land from his home place, the old Noah Krueger farm, where he lives with his wife, Marjorie, and two daughters, Donna and Carol.

The Wolters' children are all living excepting Fred who was killed in an accident a number of years ago. Some of them reside in Wetaskiwin.

### N.W. 3-45-23-W4

This quarter was homesteaded by Mr. John McVicar, who taught school in the Battle River District. It was later bought by Mr. Edward Dowswell, who farmed it from the home place, N.W. 2-45-23-W4. On the home place also live Charlie, a son of Edward Dowswell, with his wife, Una and four children, namely, Dale, Roy, Arlene and Lorie.

Mr. Ed Dowswell also owns S.W. 35-45-22-W4. This quarter was bought from the CPR in 1898 by Mr. Frederick P. Spencer. He and Mrs. Spencer had two sons and two daughters. They lived in a tent near the river until they were able to build a house. In a few years Mr. Spencer decided to move into Wetaskiwin. One son, Thomas, remained on the farm for a few years before he, too, moved into town to go railroading. He is now retired. His wife is a sister to Mrs. Ed Wilson. The youngest of the Spencer family, Grace is married to Mr. Charlie B. McMurdo of Wetaskiwin. Still a very active curler, Mrs. McMurdo was just recently presented with a Life Membership in the Wetaskiwin Curling Club. She can still remember walking from their home by the river to the Wilson home to get some butter for her mother when she was a small girl.

### JOHN WEST

Mr. and Mrs. John West and "Grandma" West came from the United States in 1914 and bought the west eighty acre of N.W. 12-45-23-west of 4th from William Schantz, who had traded a house in town for it from his father, Christian Schantz. (Mrs. West was the mother of Mrs. Roy Newville.) They farmed there until 1925 when death took the mother and the wife. Mr. West then went to live with Mr. and Mrs. Newville, who had recently moved to Wetaskiwin. He died shortly after.

Hale Howe, who had been working for the Newvilles, then rented the land until it was sold to Alfred Dahms in 1928.

## BYRON GRANT

Byron Grant lived at Glendon, Minnesota, until 1903 when he came to Alberta, following in the footsteps of his brother Hudson. After looking about for land, he was able to buy the west half of 33-44-23-W4th from Tom Kerr. Tom was married to a LaRoque girl whose family lived farther east along the river.

That summer he sent for his wife, his two sons and two daughters. When they arrived the Kerrs had not yet moved out so they moved into the sod house which was the home of the Hudson Grant family. There was only a sod shack on the land Byron had bought, too, but they occupied it for some time before they could build a better one.

The younger son, Harry, stayed on the farm with his father, and after the death of the latter, he took over the farm.

Harry remained a bachelor for quite a number of years until he met and married Mabel Churchill. They had one son Fred.

Harry passed away in July 1954 and his wife and son now live in Edmonton. The farm is now under the ownership of Donald Angus.

## THE WARD BAILEY FAMILY

Ward Bailey, son of Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Bailey of the Angus Ridge District, married Miss Mary Franklin in 1923 and settled on the S.W. ¼ 3-45-23-W4. Mary Franklin's parents had come from Quebec and settled in the Haultain District to the east across the Battle River. Mrs. Todd, an Indian woman, was mid-wife at the birth of Mary Franklin in 1899.

Ward and Mary raised two children, Agnes and Ralph. Another child died in infancy. They have worked hard throughout the years building up their farm, milking a large herd of Jersey cows and raising large flocks of chicken from which they sell eggs to the hatcheries. Ralph's greatest hobby has been photography, at which he excels. Agnes has been a valuable member of the Angus Ridge W.I. along with her mother. Perfection is her goal in all types of handicraft. She now holds a certificate from the Banff School of Fine Arts to teach weaving. She is just now completing her four year term as Provincial Convener of Handicraft for the Alberta Women's Institute. Agnes is now just about to enter into a new phase of her life, for on April 18, 1959, she will become Mrs. Joe Bentley. Her new home will be on the old Evans place, which was first owned by R. M. (Bob) Angus, who operated a post office there.

Ward served for a number of years on the school board of the Battle River School.

Ward and Mary very well remember the terrible hailstorm that struck this whole area north of the Battle River in 1902, when the crops were beaten into the ground, trees stripped of their leaves and even branches, and small animals, chickens and birds were killed.

Ward's parents brought potatoes (Potentate) with them from Michigan and these potatoes are still grown on the Bailey farm. They have always taken first prize whenever entered for exhibit at the Wetaskiwin Fair. The Baileys also grow red currants that are descendants of bushes which the Franklins had secured from the Indian Head, Saskatchewan Experimental Farm in 1898. The hailstorm of 1902 killed all the bushes but one. These currants have also always received the first prize ribbon whenever exhibited.

On this farm is an unusual chair — a swinging rocker, which Mrs. J. W. Bailey had received as a wedding present in Michigan in 1891.

## THE KOKAS FAMILY

Joseph Kokas had been farming west of Millet for a number of years before buying the west half of N.W. 12-45-23-west of 4th, from Tom Cherrington, and moved in with his wife, Hanna, and four children in the spring of 1945.

Later they bought the N.E. 11-45-23-west of 4th to supplement the farm land, and then the N.E. 1-45-23-west of 4th as well. One more child, Myles, was born since their move to this community. The daughter, Helen, is now Mrs. Richard Hay, son of the late Mr. and Mrs. H. F. Hay. The only other member of the family, besides Myles, living in this district is Eddy, who is now on the old Nelles homestead.

The County of Wetaskiwin has purchased a small portion of N.E. 1-45-23-west of 4th for a gravel pit and it is said that the quantity of gravel is almost unlimited.



### THE DAHMS FAMILY

Alfred Dahms moved with his family from the Crooked Lake (Wang) district to buy the John West farm (west half of N.W. 12-45-23-west of 4th) in 1928. Their family of seven children were growing up and some were already finished school. They remained on this farm until about 1938. Tom Cherrington became the next purchaser, and rented it out until it became the property of Joseph Kokas.

### THE HAY FAMILY

In 1913 Henry F. Hay left Germany with his wife, Minnie, and three children, Hannah (Mrs. John Logan), Fred and William. They went straight to Iowa where older brothers of Henry had preceded them. However, they did not remain there for long but came to Alberta where other brothers were located near Gwynne. Henry had been trained for the Navy and it was fortunate they decided to leave Germany when they did, for World War I broke out the next year.

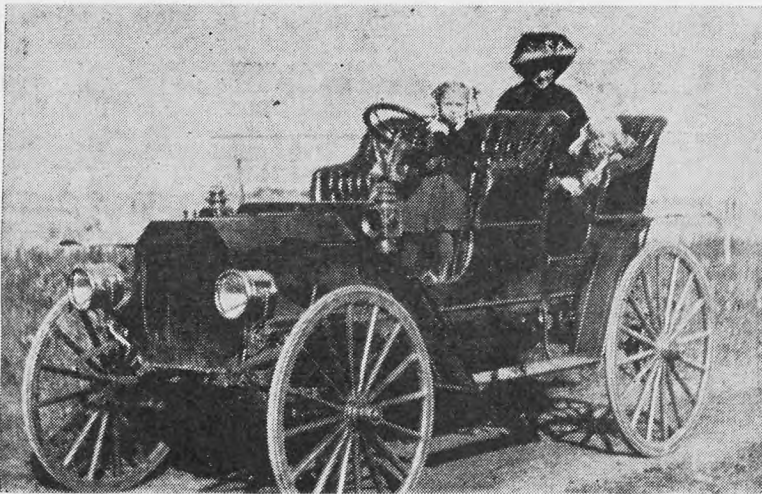
In the spring of 1914 Henry bought the S.W. 14-45-23-west of 4 from Gus Gross, who had a lumber yard in town, and the family moved into a little house there. Soon they bought a house which stood on the quarter across the road from the Noah Krueger farm in the Angus Ridge District, and moved it to their newly-acquired property. This house, which is still on the Hay farm today, was built by Duncan MacEachern when he first came to the country and before he started the MacEachern Milling Company in Wetaskiwin.

Fourteen children were born to Henry and Minnie Hay. Henry passed away early in 1929 before the youngest, Martha, was born. Mrs. Hay carried on with the farming with the aid of the older boys, and raised her growing family. She passed away very suddenly in 1956.

Since that time Albert (now married to Pearl Bolton) has taken over the home place. His twin brother, Edward has purchased the quarter across the road to the south, S.W. 11-45-23-west of 4, which Mrs. Hay had bought from Alvin Nelles in the early 1950's. He is now completing a house and garage preparatory to moving there this spring with his wife, the former Muriel Malmas. He and Albert have each a son.

### JOHN WALLACE

The Henry Hay farm had first been owned by the John Wallace family in the 1890's. Margaret Wallace married Benjmain Schantz. When the Wallaces' left the farm it was purchased by Gus Gross and held by him for a number of years until it was sold to H. F. Hay.



Pride of the pioneer was this early auto. Note the hard-tire "buggy" wheels.

## PERCY BLAND

Percy Bland was born in England and came to Canada as a young man, settling in Ontario. When World War I broke out he joined the Army and went overseas. When the hostilities ended, he returned to Canada, this time coming west to Alberta.

He settled first on the "Mulloy" or "Riverside" farm, but in April 1919 he purchased the N.W. and N.E. 14-45-23-4 from J. Vogel. The north-west quarter had originally been homesteaded by Andrew Wallace, son of John Wallace. Percy put up buildings on this quarter then later sold the north-east quarter to Walter Schantz and his wife (nee Gertrude Thirsk). Walter was the son of Christian Schantz (Jr.). This quarter now belongs to Leonard Pearson.

Percy sold his own quarter to Bruce Switzer in 1957, but retained the building a spot for himself. His house is surrounded by windbreaks, hedges and a beautiful lawn which he takes much pride in caring for. Three times a week he takes a walk to the mail-box over a mile to the north and returns with the mail, not only for himself but also for his two neighbors, the Switzers and the Ericsons.

## THE T. H. HUTCHINSON FAMILY

Thomas William Hutchinson was born in 1865 in Highbridge, Somersetshire, England. He came to Canada as a young boy of eighteen and lived for a time at Souris, Manitoba, then crossed the border into the U.S. and lived at Souris, N.D. for a number of years.

Mrs. Hutchinson, nee Lily Heighes, was born near London, England in 1875 and came to Canada, a child of 12 years, with her parents. They also lived for a time at Souris, Manitoba and then Souris, N.D. Here Tom and Lily met and were married, June 1st, 1893.

Mr. Hutchinson came to the Ponoka district in 1899 and purchased land, on what had been the Sharphead Indian Reservation, four miles west of Ponoka. In 1900 he came with his wife and family of three children, Joe, Cecil and Mary (Polly) to their new home in the Valley of the Battle River. Six more children were born at Ponoka.

Mr. Hutchinson farmed for a time, long enough to establish a good pure bred Shorthorn herd and some good race horses. He then went into the Real Estate business for a short period, then became Secretary Treasurer of both the town of Ponoka and the Fertile Valley Municipality.

Mrs. Hutchinson was active in Red Cross work and spent a number of years as trustee of the Ponoka School District. She was one of the first lady trustees in the Province.

In 1921 they left Ponoka and bought a farm from Frank Conroy, the N.E. 1-45-23-W4, South East of Wetaskiwin, in the Battle River School District, again on the banks of the Battle River. In 1945 they moved to Wetaskiwin. The LaRoque family had lived on this quarter previously.

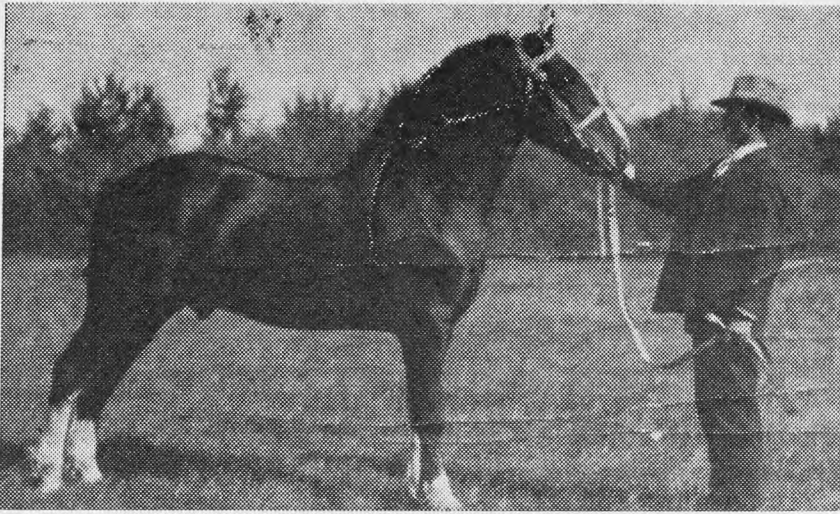
Members of the family still surviving are Joe, in Kansas, U.S., Cecil, Winnifred, Ivor and Edith in the Wetaskiwin District, Lily (Betty) in Calgary and Timothy at Tomahawk.

## THE BOLTON FAMILY

The place now occupied by the Bolton family, N.W. 2-45-23-west of 4, was first homesteaded by Jack McKay — a bachelor — in the 1890's. Since that time the farm has changed hands many times. In 1920 Nelson Bolton bought the farm from William Thirsk. Four of their sons, Thomas, Arthur, Edmond and Walter moved on to the place with Mr. and Mrs. Bolton, from Chesterwold, Alberta. Mr. Bolton died many years ago and Mrs. Bolton passed away in 1946. Thomas passed on some time ago, too.

Arthur and his wife, Hazel, raised four children, Pearl (now Mrs. Albert Hay), Norman, Donald and Gordon.

Through the years the family acquired more land to farm. Walter owns N.W. 1-45-23-west of 4, which was once owned by Hanlan Thirsk. Art purchased the east half of S.E. 11-45-23-west of 4, and in later years he also purchased N.E. 3-45-23-west of 4, where Lloyd and Caroline Shantz lived for some years. Edmund has been farming the S.W. 13-45-23-west of 4, which land belongs to Edward Krause.



**Woodlawn Prince, first prize winner at Wetaskiwin Fair in 1911**

#### **OTHER LAND IN THE BATTLE RIVER DISTRICT**

##### **S.W. 15-45-23-W4.**

This land now belongs to Bertil Engbloom. In the early part of the century it was owned and farmed by people with the name of Fenner. They sold out and moved away. The new owner was B. C. (Bert) McCrae, who farmed it, but did not live on it, until he sold out and moved to Wetaskiwin.

##### **N.W. 15-45-23-W4.**

Irwin Abbot owned this quarter at one time. The present owner is Mr. Harold Allen, son of the late Mr. Thomas Allen, who had owned it previously. Mr. H. Allen now resides in Ottawa. He has never lived on the land, but has rented it to Adolph Engbloom, who lived close by, but who now resides in Wetaskiwin.

##### **N.E. 15-45-23-W4.**

This quarter has been owned and farmed first by Chester and then by Norman Doupe for many years, but no one has ever lived on the place.

##### **S.W. 10-45-23-W4.**

During the 1890's this quarter was homesteaded by a bachelor, Frank Lowney. Tom Angus can remember spending an afternoon with him drinking coffee when he was supposed to be getting firewood for the Battle River School. Later this land belonged to Charlie Evans, and then his son, Levi. It was then taken over by Mr. R. (Bob) White of Wetaskiwin, and it is now owned by his widow. At present it is being farmed by Joe Kokas.



## BEAR'S HILL TRADING POST AND POST OFFICE

One of the earliest landmarks we have in the history of the Bear's Hill District, is that of the Trading Post and Post Office, operated by a Mr. Ramsey in 1880. He was later joined by Mr. MacDonald.

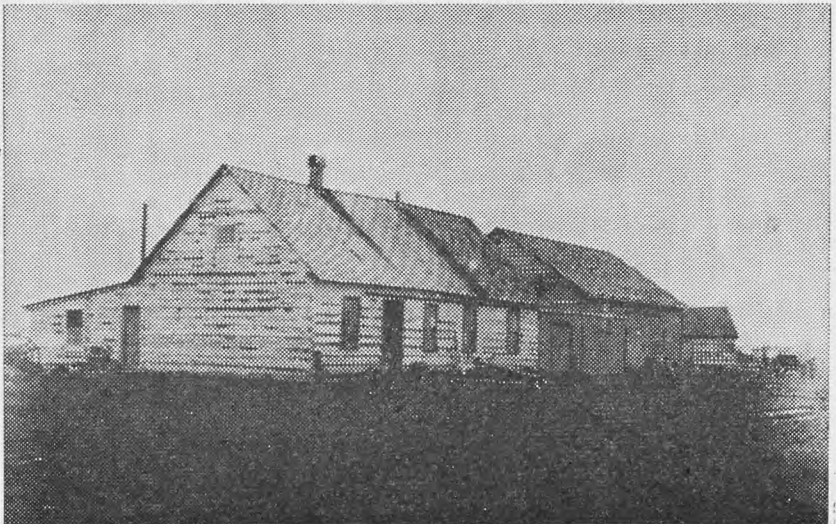
It was located on the Calgary-Edmonton Trail, N.W. 27-45-24-W4. The building was built of rough logs. After several years a buggy shed and a barn and hen house were added to the house. The store in the early days was a dark and dingy place and was an habitual hangout for half breeds and Indians. During the winter months, halfbreeds from as far as Duhamel would come on snowshoes for supplies and mail. The proprietors had married Indian women. Likewise, especially on mail days, settlers from far and near would gather at the post and would trade furs and produce for groceries. Mr. Nowochin was one of the first mail carriers. His homestead was near the Hobbema Reservation. The door of the post office had a slot for mail and at one time a halfbreed who had taken too much fire water kicked the door in.

The store smelled of hides and skins of animals that were piled high in the corner. The owners did a wholesale business in bartering for furs. A large wooden open barrel of crackers and ginger snaps, open jars of dill pickles, cheese, tinned goods, salt pork, boxes of dried fruit, gaudy bolts of calico, trays of beads and cans of coaloil made up the store's supplies.

A large pot bellied stove stood in the centre of the main room, heating the building during the winter months. Bracket coaloil lamps, with reflectors were fastened to the walls to give light and a dim eerie light it was. Alf Ellis clerked in the store for some time when he was a young man.

The Post Office was deserted when Henry T. Sharlow (father of Harry Sharlow, of Wetaskiwin) came to the country in 1905. Here young Harry brought his bride, who had arrived from Guernsey Isles in 1906. Here six of a family of eight children were born to them. Mrs. Bruce Switzer of the Cherry Grove District and a member of the Angus Ridge Women's Institute is their only daughter. There are three living sons, Bill, living in Vancouver, is employed by the Gas Company, Harold teaches school in Calgary and Leslie also lives in Calgary and is a member of the Army. The family would go to the Bear's Hill school to attend Sunday services. Later when the districts were revised, the property belonged to the Bulyea school district and the Sharlow children attended that school.

Mr. Oscar Kuester is the present owner of the original trading post property. It is said that this post office at Bear's Hill was the only one between Red Deer and Edmonton for some time.



The Bears Hill Store in 1902



# The Bears Hill Mine

Anrew Gentz was drilling a well in 1908 for Louis Ramsen on the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  10-45-24 W4 which is now the home place of Mr. and Mrs. Malta Bolt, when he ran into a seam of coal. He had no idea how much coal there was until later when Gunn and Son of Winnipeg actually dug for coal. They had a contract for building a bridge for the Grand Trunk Railway and needed coal to run their hoisting engines. Ellis Brothers of Wetaskiwin were handling the business for the Winnipeg company here, and when news of the seam of coal reached them, work started towards putting down a shaft eight by twelve feet to a depth of ninety feet. A continual flow of water running into the shaft was a big hazard. Different methods were used to pump the water from the shaft and it has been said that a Dodge car was used. It was jacked up and the rearwheels ran the pump. Harry Sharlow drove a team of horses to Edmonton to bring some dynamite to blast the hard clay encountered in the digging. Finally a five foot seven inch seam of coal was struck, but it had in it a seven inch seam of clay which had to be picked out as it lessened the value of the coal.

Gunn and Son leased fifteen hundred acres of land from the Government at one dollar per acre, thinking that they might find a better grade of coal.

Henry Sharlow then sunk a five hundred and twenty foot shaft on the same quarter of land, and he struck the same vein of coal. Gunn and Son then hired a geologist from Winnipeg to examine the findings. He claimed the coal had been brought down by a glacier.

On one occasion, Mr. Gunn walked down the shaft which ran underground for a quarter of a mile. Unfortunately he bumped his head and knocked himself unconscious. He was then taken back to the mouth of the shaft in a wheelbarrow by one of the miners, and upon recovery, Mr. Gunn gave him a five dollar bill.

A hoisting engine brought the coal to the surface and farmers bought it for one dollar and twenty-five cents for a wagon box load. Mr. Victor Erickson, father of Mrs. Malta Bolt worked at the mine. However mining operations lasted for less than a year for the Government insisted that another shaft for air be put down, and the company felt that there was too much expense involved, so the mine was closed down and it filled with water.

Twenty years later, E. A. (Ted) Reynolds made plans to open the mine. He pumped all the water out, went down the shaft and walked back into the mine for a quarter of a mile. There were those in the district who were opposed to Ted opening the mine and some trouble resulted.

Finally the buildings from this old mine were sold to Emil Lundell. Other land, such as that owned by John Barry and a Mr. Partridge was searched for coal, but nothing more was found.

Then an Italian family by the name of Whitley opened a shaft on the Julius Schmuland quarter, S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  10-45-24 W4, now owned by Fred Schmuland.

The Whitleys bought a 40-foot wide tiple, screens and other coal mining machinery from the Dawson coal mine in Edmonton, but the depression of the 1930's came on and coal from Edmonton could be bought cheaper than from this mine, so these people gave up their venture and shipped the machinery back to Edmonton. At that time Ed Bye, roadmaster for the CPR said that if good coal were found, his company would build a spur line to the mine, but, of course, that was not done.

Not long ago, a party who had ideas of re-opening the mine made an examination of it and found everything in exceptionally good condition. All woodwork was as firm as could be and there was no sign of crumbling whatever. The coal cars were there still filled with coal.



## JOHN MALMAS

From a little Swedish village called "Gammal Svenskby" on the Snieper river in the southern Ukraine, in 1899, John Malmās and his young bride, decided to come to a new country. They left their home early in August and arrived in Winnipeg, Manitoba on the seventh of September, where they stayed until early spring, 1891. They then took the train to Red Deer, Alberta, and from there on by team with Henry Utas, to Strathcona. Here they decided to retrace their steps, returning to a tract of land about eight miles south of Wetaskiwin known as Bear's Hill. Mr. Malmās carefully chose a quarter of land, the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  12-45-24-W4 as a homestead. At this time the first white child was born in the district (Dr. Andrew Joseph Malmās) under the most primitive conditions.

Then began the tedious preparation for the building of a home. A dugout was the first domicile, and consisted of walls and roof, built of sod over an area that had first been excavated two feet below the land level. This was warm and comfortable for the winter, but in the spring they found after one day of rain outside, it rained two indoors. The sod would absorb considerable moisture and what it couldn't hold drained through. During that past summer John Malmās worked on the railroad from Menaik to Edmonton.

Tilling the land was no problem, combining forces with a friend, who owned a horse, the motive power was solved. The horse and cow were harnessed and teamed up to primitive homemade implements.

How thankful they were for a good vegetable garden and some wild fruit, such as strawberries and sakatoons, which grew right up to their doors. Wild hares or rabbits were also plentiful. Partridge, prairie chicken, wild ducks and geese were easily obtained so the homestead fared well.

During the summer of 1892, John Malmās with fifty cents in his pocket went to Calgary, hiking all the way. He was fortunate in obtaining work with the Eau Lumber Co.

During this summer another son was born, Gustave William in their first cabin. All alone at the time, Mrs. Malmās waited patiently for a neighbor to drop in, but due to illness nobody came for a few days.

Mrs. Malmās and the two babies lived on the homestead. Turning her cow out to pasture after the morning milking Bossy often failed to return on schedule, then Mrs. Malmās would make a hasty tour of the neighboring pasture land in search of the cow, after first tethering her two babies at home. They were too small to walk far and too heavy to carry. In constant dread of what might happen to them in her short absence, Mrs. Malmās raced for the straying cow and brought her home at top speed. Those were the days when women wore long skirts, many of which acquired a hula hula effect after a few trips through the small brush and often rough terrain.

The year passed and John Malmās counted his hard earned profits at the lumber work. He invested this in a lumber wagon and a team of horses, which had been offered for sale. Visualizing the surprise of his family on his return, with this luxurious mode of transportation, he made ready to start for his northern homestead. Then occurred the unexpected. A man arrived on the scene claiming to be the owner of the horses and wagon which Mr. Malmās had just purchased. He said they had been stolen from him, and that the man who had sold them to Mr. Malmās was a thief and an imposter.

With his command of the English language still a bit sketchy, and his knowledge of the laws of the country nil, he had given in without realizing it. In spite of his heated argument, the team, wagon and man disappeared and Mr. Malmās never saw the rascals again. He knew that he had been slickered in what at that time was a fairly popular racket.

At this time the forests west of the Bull and Ermineskin Indian reserve were being hewn and the logs brought home to the various homesteads for the purpose of building houses and barns. During the winter time when sleighs could be used, was the season for this work to be done. With a new house in view, Mr. Malmas got his logs out, working early and late. Mrs. Malmas and the children held the fort doing the daily chores and keeping the home fires burning during those short winter days and long winter nights.

Came summer and with the early moisture, a tremendous growth of grass resulted. Followed by a long spell of extremely hot dry weather. Then one day, they noticed a reddish grey haze in the sky and the smell of smoke in the air. Realizing that a "prairie fire" was in progress, a hastily made fireguard was made around their little home, which was all that saved them. The fire swept everything before it. The logs which were to have been their new home had vanished with only their blackened embers to remind them of their lost hopes.

But progress was not to be stayed. Another small house was built, pretty well on the pattern of the first one but with some homier and cosier touches added. Their stock was increasing. A horse or two had been added, and a little more land broken and tilled into fields.

The years rolled on and their third son was born, John Jr. in 1896. Later Theodore Clarence. They now had four sons with the two eldest ready for school, but no school. The district erected a small log building and a teacher was procured.

As a trustee of the school Mr. Malmas served long and faithfully, a tradition carried on in later years by his sons.

Their fifth son died in infancy.

In 1902, Mr. Malmas procured lumber with the intention of building a new home, but his hopes and ambitions were not to be realized. On the 23rd day of August, a terrible hailstorm struck the district destroying his crops. Therefore the building of the new home had to be postponed.

Later on they decided to go on with the building and a nice frame house was erected, which still stands on the old place today, but has been remodeled and a large addition made to it.

Then came the pleasant event of a baby sister into the family. They name her Annie.

In 1916 their eldest son, Andrew graduated from the Ontario Veterinary College and the following year was married and moved to Didsbury.

In 1919 Mr. and Mrs. Malmas rented the farm at home to the next two oldest sons and taking Anna with them they moved to Chilliwack, B.C. In 1924 they sold out and returned to their home at Bear's Hill.

By this time both the older boys were married, and John who was living on the old homestead, bought a half section of land and Ted took over farming.

John Malmas, Jr. bought the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  18-45-23 W4 from Lou Sinclair who had originally bought from Art Rix, who had homesteaded it.

Gus Malmas bought the N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  12-45-24 W4 from his uncle, Theodore Malmas, who had bought it from John Berry and he had bought it from John Utas, who had settled there in 1893. This land is now owned by Gus Buskas.

Mr. and Mrs. Malmas lived on their farm until 1937, when their son Ted died of flu. Their daughter Annie had just married Alvin Walters, so they farmed their old homestead and Mr. and Mrs. Malmas moved to Westaskiwin where they lived until they passed on, Mr. Malmas in 1945 and Mrs. Malmas in 1952.

### RIX FAMILY

J. J. Rix with his family came to Alberta in 1893, filing on the S.E. 2-45-24 W4 adjoining the Ermineskin Reservation.

As the family became of age they too took up homesteads. Herbert had the S.W. 2-45-24-W4 and lived there for a number of years, after which he bought the home place. He married Edna Thorsen and farmed until he passed on.

C. C. Reed filed on the North half of 2-5-24-W4 and after a few years of batching he sold to William Smith, who lived in the wee log cabin with sod roof and floor, but which was still very cozy. After several years this farm was sold to Joe Berry who built the large frame house still standing. He also drilled the first soft water well in the district.

Mr. McDermitt, whose homestead was the North half of 2-45-24-W4 farmed but a few years and then sold to Peter Weiler and family who farmed for a number of years. He sold to Mr. Schell, who stayed until his health failed. The present owner is Harry Rix, a son of A. W. Rix.

"My childhood's home I see again  
And sadden with the view;  
And still, as memory crowds my brain  
There's pleasure in it too."

### R. ROTVICK

Mr. and Mrs. R. Rotvick arrived in the Bear's Hill District in the spring of 1892 with their two sons, Charles and John and two daughters, Annie and Mrs. John Olson and her husband, John Olson. They settled on Section 14-45-34 W4th.

Mr. and Mrs. John Olson lived just north of Rotvicks on N.W. ¼ 14-45-24-W4th.

When the two sons grew up Charles moved to Malmo and John moved out west of Red Deer.

Annie Rotvick married Mr. Soderstrom and they took over the home place until they were not able to do the work any more. Then a grandson of Mr. R. Rotvick, Mr. Gus Rotvick took over the farm and is still farming it today. This farm has always been in the Rotvick family.

### EMIL LUNDELL

Mr. Emil Lundell came to the Bear's Hill District in 1897 from Revelstoke, B.C. where he had spent several years since coming from Sweden.

He located on the N.E. ¼ 14-45-24 W4, which he purchased from Chris Sigale. He brought his bride from Minnesota soon after he had purchased his land. While he was gone the weather had turned very wet and he encountered some difficulty getting out from Wetaskiwin to his home with a team and a wagon.

They were blessed with five children, two sons and three daughters, Elmer, Myrtle, Minnie and Marian. Elmer still owns the home place. Helge and family reside in the district.



Dismantling the original Nieman house in 1922

## THE THORSEN FAMILY

Mr. Gunner Thorsen, at the age of 11 crossed the Atlantic ocean with the rest of his family from Stavanger, Norway, to the United States in a sailboat. The crossing took weeks and the boat was nearly sunk in one very bad storm. The family settled in Iowa. At the age of 25, Gunner married Emma Somme and they settled down at Rock Rapids, Iowa until 1902, when they decided to come north to Alberta, Canada, with their five children.

Arriving at Wetaskiwin, they bought the N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  22-45-24 W4th from Joe Utas and the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  22-45-24 W4th adjoining it from Mr. Naslund.



A pioneer woman at a pioneer spinning wheel converting raw wool into yarn for knitting.

This farm is about four and a half miles south of Wetaskiwin. The children attended the Bear's Hill School during the first years. Later, when the Bulyea District was formed, Mr. Thorsen acted as a member of the school board for a number of years.

Mrs. William Shantz (nee Anna Thorsen), now the only living member of the family recalls many incidents of the early days. They had brought with them a democrat with a top, and on one of their first trips to Wetaskiwin, they met disaster. As they were crossing a large mudhole something broke, and Mr. Thorsen and the horses went out onto the dry land with the front wheels, while the family were left sitting, a very dishevelled group, in the rest of the democrat at the muddy edge of the slough with clouds of mosquitoes for company.

Another time in the spring of the year, they were half way across a big slough when the horses got stuck, and they all had to take off their shoes and stockings and wade out to dry land.

The children went three miles to school on horseback and it was a long ride each day, especially when it got cold, for it often got to 40 below zero. Anna used to go with her brother, Herb, to trap muskrats on the sloughs on their farm. They could go from one end of the place to the other on skates while trapping, as it was very wet during those years.

One sister married Herb Rix, father of Vern Rix of Wetaskiwin and settled in the Bear's Hill District. Another sister married and left this part of the country. The brother Herb went to Winnipeg where he was a barber for many years. The first year they were here a third sister, Andrea, went to school in Wetaskiwin in the old school house before the Alexandra School was built, and she won a set of books from Mr. Rutherford for obtaining the highest marks in Alberta. She then went to Edmonton to complete High School, and to Calgary to attend Normal School. Mrs. Shantz attended Wetaskiwin's first school too for one year and then finished High School in the Alexandra School, starting the first year it was built. She also attended Normal School in Calgary, which was the only one in the Province.

Mrs. Shantz is the mother of seven children and she has a number of grandchildren. She and her husband William live in retirement in Wetaskiwin.



### AUGUST ERICKSON

Mr. and Mrs. August Erickson arrived in the Bear's Hill District in 1900 from Minnesota, with on son Victor and a daughter, Alma. They located on the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  15-45-24 W4th, which they acquired from the CPR. Their land has not changed hands and is now operated by Carl and Arthur, their younger sons. Since Mr. and Mrs. Erickson passed on, Victor acquired his own land in 1910, namely N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  3-45-24 W4th and is still operating it. His sister, Alma passed away at an early age.

### JOHN ASP

Mr. John Asp arrived in the Bear's Hill District in 1904 from Minnesota and acquired the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  15-45-24-W4th from the CPR. He stayed only a few years, then he sold his land to Mr. Carl Johnson, an uncle of Mrs. August Erickson. Mr. Asp moved into Wetaskiwin and went into business. Mr. Johnson has passed on and Elof Erickson now owns the land.

### JOHN VASSBERG

Mr. and Mrs. John Vassberg arrived in the Bear's Hill District in 1904 from the Dakotas. They had three sons, John, Ernest and Carl. They located on the N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  15-45-24 W4th which they acquired from the CPR. Mrs. Vassberg still lives on the farm and is over ninety years of age. Her husband passed away some time ago. Ernest lives on a farm nearby. Carl, Sven, Ellen and John passed away some time ago. (Mrs. Vassburg passed away in 1959).

### ANDREW SCHMULAND

Mr. and Mrs. Andrew Schmuland arrived in the Bear's Hill District from Winnipeg, in the spring of 1891, with four sons, Julius, Ferdinand, Gus and Rudolph. They settled on Sec. 10-45-24 W4. This farm has always been owned by one of the Schmulands.

### ANDREW SIGALET

Andrew Sigalet and son Andrew Jr. came to the Bear's Hill District in 1891 and homesteaded on Sec. 24-45-24 W4. They sold this land to Maurice Fonteyne, who farmed it for some years and then they moved to Wetaskiwin. The farm was sold to Paul Gusse, who is on it at the present time.

### CHRIS SIGALET

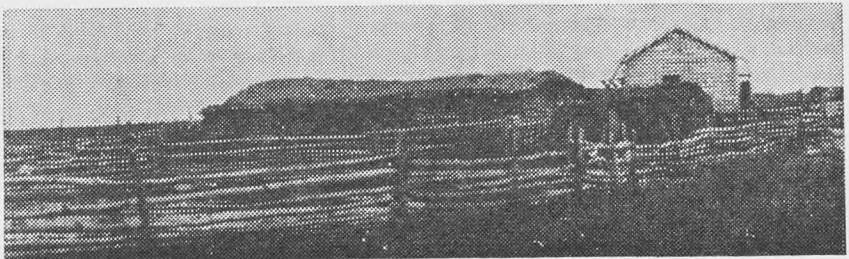
Another Sigalet brother, Chris, came the same time as his brother in 1891 and settled across the road from Andrew on the N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  14-45-24 W4. This was later sold to Mr. Emil Lundell and is presently managed by his son, Elmer Lundell.

### HENRY UTAS

Henry Utas who had come to this district with Mr. and Mrs. John Malmas settled on the S.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  14-45-24 W4. Here they farmed for awhile and while here, Mr. Utas donated a piece of his land in the southeast corner of the quarter to be used as a graveyard. There are about half a dozen graves there but it has never been kept up. This land was sold to John Berry and then to I.M.C. Jackson and then to Ed Krause who owns it today.

### COLBY

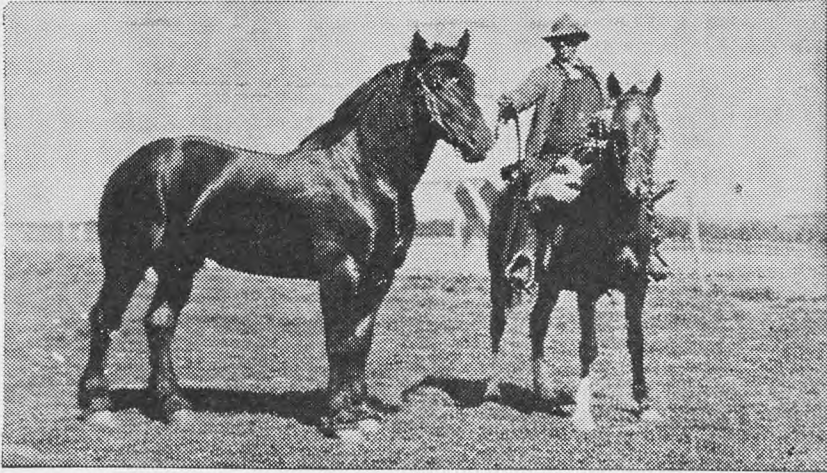
Colby settled on the S.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  13-45-24-W4. It was sold to John Berry, Percy Rix, then to I.M.C. Jackson and now is owned by Ed Krause.



The Joe Utas place sold to Gunnar Thorsen in 1902

## THE FONTEYNE FAMILY

Mr. C. Fonteyne arrived in the Bears Hill district in 1900 from Belgium. He purchased the south half of Section 24-45-24 W4 from Mr. A. Sigalet and commenced farming. In 1903 he brought Mrs. Fonteyne and his two sons, Maurice and Arthur to this new country. He farmed until the late 1930's. Then Maurice took over the farm and operated it until 1945, when he sold out to Mr. Paul Guss, who is still operating this farm.



This Nieman stallion sired many of the work horses in the community

## THE REIMER FAMILY AND HAULTAIN DISTRICT

In 1898 Mr. and Mrs. George Carpenter and their seven children came to the Wetaskiwin District. They had quite an eventful trip travelling in a covered wagon caravan with about 75 other families from South Dakota to Fort Macleod, from there they boarded a train to Wetaskiwin. They bought their farm from a Mr. Oliver, mainly because it had a house and the Battle River ran through the land. The crossing on this river is still referred to as the Carpenter Bridge.

Mr. Carpenter later sold this land and it passed through several hands, now in 1958 his grandson, Orval Reimer owns it. They have a new home and a new farm site, the original house still stands very straight and sound.

In 1900 Mr. and Mrs. Jergin Reimer came up to the Wetaskiwin District and settled near the Carpenter family. In 1907 Goldie Carpenter and John Reimer were married and in 1957 celebrated their Golden Wedding. They still reside close to their original homes.

Some interesting facts concerning this district in the early 1900's are: The Battle River Post Office that served an area of about 20 miles was located on what is now the Frank Johnson farm. A Mrs. Mountain ran it.

The old school house, a log building, was located on the banks of a small lake. It was later shut down because of a shortage of students and for a period of two years the Reimer and Carpenter children went to Cherry Grove school.

Some of the early residents of this community were Jake and Ben Shantz, George Irvin, Carl Johnson, Jim Franklin, Cooks Carruthers, Joe George, Alf McLachlan and a Mr. Hamilton.

These farms in 1958 are owned and occupied by the Humbke, Eikerman, Johnson and Hutchinson families.

# Cherry Grove History

"The year eighteen hundred and ninety-two found our settlers with plenty to do."

In the early 1890's the seasons were very dry, and getting to Wetaskiwin merely meant setting your sights and letting your horses follow their noses. From 1900 to 1902 it was very wet and it was a common sight to see a wagon sink to its hubs in mud and have to be pulled by two teams. To go past the Swanson home and get to the church road, horses had to wade belly-deep through the slough. Although you travel on a high gravelled grade now, the slough still grown an abundance of bullrushes for those who value their decorative qualities.

As early as 1892 Mr. Claus O. Swanson, a Swedish immigration officer, began bringing settlers to the district which soon became known as New Sweden. Although they were outside the borders of the revised Cherry Grove district, we would like to pay tribute to the first two to arrive in this new land where buffalo bones lay strewn on the unbroken soil. They were Gustav Johnson, father of Regnard Johnson, and August Anderson, father of Emil Anderson. For many years the two-roomed log house of the Andersons was a haven for new settlers. Some would stay for months while waiting for their own homes to take shape. For forty years Mr. Anderson served on the church board.

The years of 1893 and 1894 saw the influx of more settlers. Mr. Swanson brought in many families with the governments understanding that if they were dissatisfied in any way, their return fare would be paid. A large group arrived on April 13, 1893 and were so dismayed to find three feet of snow everywhere that several families made the return trip immediately. Others of the group settled in New Sweden and some went to the Malmo district to the south.

Mr. Claus Swanson remained here and homesteaded what became known as the Carl Eliason Farm, N.E. 34-45-23-W. 4. He sent for his family and, on the day they were to arrive, he started for town on horseback. There were no bridges in those days and as he tried to ford a swift and swollen creek, he and the horse parted company. The horse scrambled up the bank and went on his way. Mr. Swanson, dripping wet, trudged off westward till he came to the railroad tracks. There he followed northward into the little hamlet of Wetaskiwin.

In those days money was scarce and rabbits were plentiful, so "Bugs Bunny" often graced the dinner table. Settlers who had no guns or money for shells would dig pits and cover them lightly with branches and grass. Unsuspecting rabbits who came hopping along would fall into the pits, and meet their fate next morning. Their meat was often salted down for future use.

Two sons of Mr. Claus O. Swanson, Albin and Charlie, and a daughter Beda, lent color to the story of New Sweden. In the winter of 1898 the father and son, Charlie, hauled wheat to south Edmonton to trade for flour and some cash. It took a day and a half to make the trip one way, and with temperatures of fifty and fifty-five below, it meant nearly steady walking to keep from freezing. If they made a stop and built a fire, they were immediately surrounded by wolves. They thought the only thing that held them at bay was the jingling of the horses' sleigh bells.

Albin Swanson bought the C.P.R. quarter, S.W. 35-45-23 W. 4, where one of his sons, Ralph, now resides. Albin married in 1915 and to this union a family of five children were born. Bernard of New Norway, Ralph of the home place, Allan of Red Deer, Ruby (Mrs. Enarson) of Vancouver, and Norma (Mrs. Saefke) of Minneapolis, U.S.A. Eunice died in 1944.

The Swansons planted a beautiful grove of trees which is still standing. Albin and his wife moved to Wetaskiwin in 1945. Mrs. Swanson passed away in 1959. Mr. Swanson's memory is so clear that he can remember tales of 1893 better than most of us can recall the happenings of last year.

Ralph and his wife, the former June Merner of Wetaskiwin, resided with their family on the home place. The four children, Dianne, Dale, Glen and

Donald keep them busy and interested. This good couple are a credit to the community, both taking a very active part in the Sunday School and the church.

Beda Swanson met a very young man, Carl Eliason, at the wedding of Mr. and Mrs. Gust Bradenburg. He had come from Nebraska in 1902 to try his luck at pioneering. On November 28 they were married—theirs the first wedding in the newly-built New Sweden Church.

Before Carl Eliason settled down in this district on the N.E. 34-46-22 W. 4, he had been doing odd jobs near Frank, Alberta, at the time of the great slide. After he and Beda were married they lived in the old Oscar Eliason house on E.  $\frac{1}{2}$ -4-46-23 W4. This house, built of logs in 1895 by C. Peterson, still stands and is being used as a granery by Gordon Eliason. It had been moved in 1905 to its present site N.W. 35-45-23-W 4, with the aid of 28 head of horses. The Eliason family moved about a good deal, having pioneered up on a homestead at Knob Hill, farmed the Sveaborg place owned by C. Swanson, managed a saw mill, lumbered at Knob Hill for ten years, farmed the present Gordon Eliason home place, and then in 1941 they moved to Wetaskiwin. Mrs. Eliason passed away in 1950 and her children, Newton and Edgar who reside in Wetaskiwin and are engaged in the road construc-



**The building that served as a home for the McRae family when they arrived in 1902. Reported to be the oldest building in the Angus Ridge district it is still in use at the Engbloom farm. The original roof was of straw.**

tion business, Arno, who lives at Burnaby, B.C., and Grace, who is Mrs. Sven Eklund of Wetaskiwin.

The Carl Eliason farm was rented for a number of years by Gordon Eliason and Ralph Swanson, and in 1959 they bought the land.

Others came in 1892. Among them were Dan McRae, his wife and two children, Bert and Jennie, from Spokane, Washington. They arrived in October and for five days stayed in the freight sheds, the only buildings worth mentioning, in Wetaskiwin, while Mr. McRae scouted around for suitable land. He finally located on the S.E. 22-45-23 W. 4, in the Cherry Grove district. That winter they lived in a little log house on the farm where Bertil Engbloom now lives in the Angus Ridge district. That log house, now used as a hog house, is probably the oldest building in the district still in use. Mr. McRae spent the winter cutting and hauling logs from the Battle River to build on his own place. For some years Bert and Jennie rode horseback to attend school at Battle River, two and a half miles to the south.

The McRae home was a gathering place on Sundays for young and old as they had an organ and Jennie would play for sing-songs. Very few organs were to be found in the country at that time and pianos not at all. During the years from 1912 to 1929 the McRae's lived at Coronation and at Van-



couver and the parents died without returning to live on the farm. In the meantime Bert married Nellie Rowley of Vancouver, and in 1929 they came back to Cherry Grove to live on the old homestead.

Bert served many years on the local and on the enlarged school division boards as well as being a board member of the New Sweden Telephone Company. They have one son, Donald, married and living at Red Deer.

In 1948 the McRae's sold the farm to Carl R. Ericson and moved to Wetaskiwin where they owned and operated a dry cleaning plant for a number of years.

Carl Ericson, his wife, Vera and two young children, Sharon and Dennis, moved to the McRae farm in 1948 and were found to be both very good farmers and good neighbors. Carl's health began to fail and death called him away in 1956. Vera and the children are carrying on very successfully. Sharon won the Governor-Generals' Medal when she passed from Grade Nine and brought honour to herself and the community. Both Sharon and Dennis are active in 4-H Club work.

Many different families lived on this Ericson farm in the early years. Adolph Engbloom and his wife Hilma made it their temporary home while waiting to build on their own farm S.E. 16-45-23 W4. During this time their first son Gustav was born, with the assistance of Carrie, Mrs. Ernest Switzer, who proved to be a very kind neighbor. Mrs. Engbloom could understand very little English, and Mrs. Switzer knew no Swedish, but they soon learned to understand each other and became very good friends. The second Engbloom baby was a girl and she was named Carrie. Bertil and Enez came along later.

John Engbloom, brother to Adolph, lived on this same farm for about three years, and he assumed the marriage vows while there.

Two more families, that of Matt Badry, and of George Shantz spent some time on this same place. Mrs. Switzer played the good neighbor to each of these families, once when the Brady baby swallowed lye, and once when the Shantz baby nearly died in a convulsion. Both babies were saved, but it did seem like a rough spot for babies.

In 1892 Richard Duncan homesteaded the quarter adjoining the McRae farm on the north. He died that winter in a Calgary hospital and the hospital took over the land in lieu of payment of doctor and hospital bills. It was later sold to Jack McKay for five hundred dollars—a sum more difficult to get in those days than is ten thousand today.

"In—"93— that seemed the year, When settlers came from far and near."

Sven Youngberg arrived in the district in 1893 and farmed N.E. 32-45-23 W. 4, now owned by Phillip Nelson. He built the house we all remember as "Phillip's Home" until the present new home was constructed in 1950. Many families owned or lived on the land throughout the years. There were A. W. Anderson, Carl Johnson, Talmano and Peterson's. One family by the name of Johnson, had five daughters, and just recently these same ladies visited the farm where they had lived so very many years ago, but they could find no remains of buildings once familiar to them.

Phillip Nelson came from Sweden in 1924 and worked at carpentering before deciding to think seriously of farming. He married Mary Johnson and they have two sons, Stanley, who graduated in civil engineering in 1960, and Ray who remained on the farm. Ray married Dorothy Fast of Delamerry, Saskatchewan, and they now have two young sons. They have their own new home on the same yard as the parent's home. It may be interesting to note that directly across the road lives Phillip's brother, Peter, and his wife, who is a sister to Phillip's wife. Modern new homes and good out-buildings show how the families have worked and prospered. Phillip has a hobby at which he works when time permits and that is the making of fish nets.

John Anderson came to this area in 1893 and homesteaded on the present Wingblade farm N.W. 36-45-23 W. 4.

Mr. John A. Wingblade was born in Kansas, U.S.A., and spent the first twenty-three years of his life there. He attended a Seminary School in Chicago for three years before being called in 1906 as a student pastor to Wetaskiwin. He ministered at the Brightview Baptist Church, then called



Scandinavian Baptist. He became an ordained minister in 1910. In 1911, at a ceremony in Calgary, he married Miss Laura Nelson who had come from Sweden. They lived in the Water Glenn district until 1915 when they bought land in the Crooked Lake area, serving as pastor in both districts. A call was received in 1916 to take over the work in Wetaskiwin as well as the Nashville Baptist Church. He later moved to the Nashville area where he farmed from 1919 to 1940. In 1935 he was elected as member of parliament to the Social Credit Government, and he has now acted in that capacity for 25 years. An only son, Bertel, also an ordained minister, is serving at North Mount Baptist Church in Calgary. He married Miss Magaret Axene and they have one daughter, Sharon. Mrs. Wingblade passed away in 1955.

Mr. Wingblade, though he leads a strenuous life, is never too tired to listen to the troubles of others. He makes weekly calls on the sick in hospital, and has assisted many elderly people to receive their old-age pensions. In 1960, to mark his 77th birthday, and his 25th anniversary as Member of Parliament, "Open House" was held at his home in Wetaskiwin and over 400 people called to wish him well.

Andrew Peterson homesteaded the N.E. 36-45-23 W. 4 in 1893. The family including four children, Edwin, Olga, Estor and Gunnar, came from the United States. They farmed the property until 1914 when Mr. Peterson passed away, to be followed shortly after by Estor and Gunnar. Later Edwin went to the U.S. to live, and Olga married Joe Haukedahl and together they farmed the land. Mrs. Peterson retired to Edmonton and Wetaskiwin until her death in 1940.

Mrs. Haukedahl passed away in 1941 leaving three children for her husband to raise. He certainly did a fine job and they are now all happily married in homes of their own. Lois (Mrs. Rasmusson) lives in Edmonton; Lorraine (Mrs. Gustafson) in Vancouver; and Cyril in Edmonton.

In 1893 Jake Schantz and family who had arrived with his parents, brothers and sisters in 1892, bought and farmed N.W. 24-45-23 W. 4 for a number of years. In 1912 they moved to Wetaskiwin and later to Vancouver where Mr. and Mrs. Schantz died. One daughter, Mary, Mrs. Wm. Lake, pre-deceased them. Another daughter Effie, Ms. Ernest Carmichael, lives in Vancouver as does her brother Orpheus.

On this same farm many years later, Walter, son of Christian Shantz, lived with his wife, the former Miss Gertruda Thirsk of Angus Ridge. Walter passed away at an early age and left Gertie to raise the family. They managed very well even though it was up-hill work. Her oldest son, Ira, of the R.C.A.F., was killed in action. Allan and Larry live in Ponoka, Burt in Wetaskiwin, Dave in Edmonton, and Irene (Mrs. Young) in Lacombe. Several years ago Gertie left to live on an acreage near Ponoka. The old farm had changed hands many times during the years. Some of those who had rented it or resided there were Bill Schantz, Bill Johns, Gordon Harris and Herbet Hay. It is once again in the hands of a member of the Schantz family, a grand nephew of Jake Schantz, and son of Leslie Shantz, Sidney Shantz.

The farm generally known as "The Bill Schantz place", now owned and farmed by a family named Meyer from Ohio. One of the daughters, Jermina, farmed by a nephew, Leslie Schantz, was first owned by a family named Meyer from Ohio. One of the daughters, Jermina was a school teacher at Cherry Grove. Theodore Elkerman bought the land from them and lived there with his father until he sold out to William Schantz, who had come here as a young boy in 1892 from Scotland, South Dakota. Bill and his wife, the former Anna Thorsen, had lived on the Emil Anderson farm from 1920 to 1924. For many years he served on the Cherry Grove School Board. After raising a family of seven children, Mr. and Mrs. Schantz moved to Wetaskiwin in 1947. Mr. Schantz passed away in 1959 after a lengthy illness. The children are now all married excepting the elder son Leonard, who farms land a few miles south of Wetaskiwin. Cecil lives in Ponoka, Nora (Mrs. Solomonson) in Edmonton, Emma (Mrs. Walter Mantai-west of Wetaskiwin, Mae (Mrs. Henry Kasur) in the Bulyea district, Olive (Mrs. Horace Hawkes) in Wetaskiwin, and Lois (Mrs. Gordon Gillespie) in Edmonton.

Dick Wild homesteaded the Riverside Farm S½ 24-45-23 W. 4 in 1894. A brother who was a doctor made his headquarters there and he practiced far and wide. At the turn of the century Dick sold the farm and took over

the Wales Hotel in Wetaskiwin. The Riverside farm may have had many beauty spots and it may have been a haven for berry pickers but this did not stop it from changing hands many times.

Mr. and Mrs. John Arnold lived on Riverside Farm from 1903 to 1908, then they moved to S.E. 27-45-23 W. 4. They had no family and were beloved by all who knew them. Mrs. Arnold organized the Battle River Missionary Society in 1916 and was its one and only President until her death and its disbandment in 1946. They lived to celebrate their 60th wedding anniversary and died within a week of each other. All the old buildings have been removed by the present owner Milton Doupe, but the big spruce trees planted by the Arnolds remain standing, monuments to their memory.

Going back to the Riverside farm, MacNamaras owned it for awhile and the Mulloy brothers lived there for several years. They kept a Chinese, called Wong, to do their cooking. Ferdinand Schmuland lived there from 1920 to 1923. Life for them was very discouraging as those were dry years and crops and grass was poor. A German family then bought the place but after the house burned they moved away and very little was known of them. Then we find that George Schmidt owned it for several years before moving to Ontario, where he died in 1959. He was the father of Mrs. J. Kokas Sr. The farm is now owned and farmed by Gus Schatschneider and sons.

In 1896 Ed. Davis homesteaded the farm that later became known as the Pearson place N.E. 28-45-23-W 4th. He was a single man and came with his widowed mother from South Dakota. They brought a different way of living with them, each had a separate house, and he went to his mothers house only for meals, or for necessary errands. In the spring of 1901 he died of small pox, the only case in the district. His burial was taken care of on his own farm by his neighbors as it was unlawful to remove the body of a small pox victim to another place.

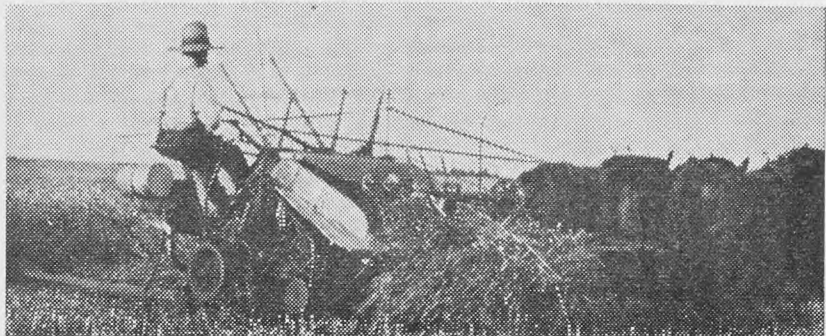
"Where are the trails I used to rove,

On my saddle through Cherry Grove?"

In the spring of 1900 the Battle River overflowed its banks and washed away the Carpenter bridge, which had been built about 1896. Crossing the river that year really made a horse swim for its life.

There were no proper roads until after 1900, just trails. The main thoroughfare through Cherry Grove from the east crossed the river at a shallow point near Dick Wilde's farm. It came west between the Switzer and McRae houses, through McRae's bluff, up to the Abbott buildings (now Tom Cherringtons) then on to the present Krutzfeldt corner, and straight northwest to Wetaskiwin.

Oscar Eliason came to Canada in 1902 from Idaho. Edward Larson and Oscar bought S.W. 3-46-23 W 4th, where Charles West now lives. They farmed together for several years before Oscar decided to take up a homestead in the Usona district. He lived there the required time to get the title to the land before returning to the United States and to Nebraska to marry his childhood sweetheart. They returned to Usona where they became the parents of two children, Evelyn and Gordon. In 1920 they decided to move



Cutting grain in 1907. Engine drive helps binder through heavy crop in wet year

closer to a school and so they bought the N.W. 35-45-23 W 4th. From Carl Eliason. This property was originally owned by Claus Swanson, with Clarence Pearson and Frank Johnson also owners at different times. The present owner, Gordon Eliason is married to Ivy Edlund, a former hairdresser in Wetaskiwin. They now have three children, Brent, Marshall and Corinne, and are very active members of their community. They have built a large modern home and are improving the outbuildings as well as acquiring more land. Gordon's sister, Evelyn, lives in Victoria, B.C.

John Berg homesteaded the S.E. 34-45-23 W 4th, which later became known as the Lilliedahl farm and which is now owned by Harvey Strohschein. Mr. Berg served as layman preacher before a church building existed and later served on the First Church board, and he was the first Sunday School Superintendent of the New Sweden Church in Cherry Grove. A daughter Ellen, married Gus Malmas of the Bears Hill district where they lived before moving to Penticton, B.C., Mr. and Mrs. Berg lived in Wetaskiwin a good many years and after Mr. Berg's passing in 1940 the land became Lilliedahl property.

Mr. and Mrs. August Lilliedahl had two sons and two daughters, namely Leslie, Kenneth, Elvira and Opal. The father and son Kenneth passed away some years ago. Elvina and Opal are both married and live with their families in the United States. Leslie is also married and lives in Edmonton. Mrs. Lilliedahl resides in Wetaskiwin and still enjoys very good health.

Mr. and Mrs. Justus Anderson were colorful figures in the life of the community. After coming from Sweden in 1906 the couple first rented various places. They later proved up on a homestead at Viking but finally decided there would be no better place to live than at New Sweden in the Cherry Grove district. So they bought S.W. 34-45-23 W 4th from Mr. Carlson in 1914. This land (S.W. 34) had first been homesteaded by Axel Linde in 1894. He was the first minister of the New Sweden Church. They had seven children, but unfortunately four of them died while quite young. The remaining three are Lily (Mrs. Sundvall) of Calgary. Gus of Camrose and Mabel (Mrs. McGovern) of Wetaskiwin. Mr. Anderson loved horses and enjoyed nothing more than a horse trade, trade for better or for worse. It was a familiar sight to see him driving along in his buggy or cutter, with a horse he had traded for trailing behind.

The son Gus, took over the farming operations for some time, but he sold the farm to Harvey Strohschein about 1950 and moved his family to Camrose where he still operates an automobile and implement business.

The senior Andersons retired to live in Wetaskiwin where Mr. Anderson died in 1958. Mrs. Anderson has always been a very active person. Many are the mats and carpets she has woven, from old clothing, on her loom. Now, in her eighties, she is planning a trip to Sweden this summer.

Mr. and Mrs. G. V. Axene came from Portland, Oregon in 1911. They lived a short time in Edmonton before taking up a homestead at Pigeon Lake, where they resided for five years. Their children were all born before they made the next move, to the New Sweden district. They recall the depression years as "very grim" and it was a continual battle to keep things going. However, Mr. Axene had another trade which helped keep the family and the farm together and that was painting, both in-door and out. They sold the farm S.E. 35-45-23 W 4th to Leonard Pearson in 1940 and moved to Wetaskiwin where Mr. Axene continued his painting trade and is still a very busy man with the brush. Their children are Edith (Mrs. Reynold Johnson), Emil, Margaret, Bertha and Carl.

Sven Ecklund farmed the N.W. 34-45-23 W. 4th with the help of his brother Eric. He married Grace Eliason and they have two children, Shirley and Eddie. They have resided in Wetaskiwin for a number of years where Sven does carpenter work. Eric still farms the land.

In 1903 Peter Pearson and family arrived from Idaho to the farm first owned by Edward Davis, N.E. 28-45-23-W4. One son, Albert was shortly after made a member of the Cherry Grove School Board. In 1905 Albert married and lived on the land his father had bought from T. Eikerman. Brides were welcomed into the neighborhood then as now, even though transportation left

much to be desired. Mr. Pearson recalls how one day Mrs. Amos Doupe and Mrs. Ernest Switzer came cantering into the yard on horseback — small baby and all. Mr. and Mrs. A. Pearson now reside in Wetaskiwin.

Another son of Peter Pearson — Clarence — married in 1910 and lived in the district for years on the S.W. 36-45-23-W4. Their four boys, Leonard, Raymond, Lorne and Donald, attended the Cherry Grove School but had quite a distance to go whether they battled the mud or snow across the fields or whether they went the long way around by the road.

A thirdson, Walter, married and began farming across the road from the home place — S.W. 27-45-23-W4. They built a large square house in 1916, and, although no one has lived there for years, the house still stands. They had one son, Lloyd, and a daughter, Joy. They were foster parents to Luella Tetreau, who made her home with them for many years. The family moved to Lethbridge where they still reside.

Ruth Pearson married Art Peterson. She died at an early age, leaving her husband with three small children — Gordon, Arlean and Mardell.

Two other daughters lived at home for a number of years. They moved to Wetaskiwin when Florence married Charlie West. Florence and Charlie farmed the home place for some time before moving to the former Ed Larson farm. They have one son, Dennis, who is keenly interested in farming. The spacious old Pearson home stood empty for many years until a Dutch family by the name of H. Koelwyn rented a small portion of land around the buildings and began market gardening. Now they, too, have moved to another acreage which they bought at Gwynne.

April, 1900 was no April Fool's Day for the Switzer and Doupe men. Bert McRae remembers that his father was splitting wood when three-men, Amos Doupe, Reubin and Ernest Switzer, drove in, in a single buggy. They wished to rent some cleared land, but such land was scarce in those days. Amos Doupe bought and settled where his son Milton now lives on the S.W. 26-45-23-W4. Adam Switzer, father of Ernest and Rueben, bought what later became known as the Arnold place and which is now owned by Milton Doupe. A Mr. Randolph Rideout from New Brunswick then owned what is now Bruce Switzer's north quarter N.W. 23-45-23-W4. He lived in a wee log house on a spot which is now a cattle feed lot. He kindly rented Amos, Reuben and Ernest thirty acres of land on which to grow some feed for cattle. Dan McRae gave them five acres on which to plant a garden and potatoes. Later that summer their families came out. These three men worked the Ed Davis farm in 1901 and 1902, and by then they had broken up enough of their own land to start farming.

In the meantime Randolph Rideout married Salome, a sister of Ernest Switzer. They built a home opposite the Amos Doupe place and planted the lovely grove of spruce trees which still stand so straight and tall. This quarter was later sold to Mr. Jake Vogel who lived there with his family for many years. When the Vogels returned to the United States Ernest Switzer bought the place and sold the house. It was moved away with the aid of twenty-four horses to the Battle River district. Reuben Switzer married the school "marm" Katherine McMurdo, and left the farm to live in Wetaskiwin.

Ernest Switzer bought the S.W. 23-45-23-W4 and married Carrie Martin, a home-town St. Mary's Ontario girl. They had a family of two sons and two daughters — Harold, Bruce, Helen and Phyllis. Harold married Esther Callies and farmed one of the adjoining quarters. During one of Alberta's hardest winters, their little three-year-old daughter died of Bronchial Croup. Roads were almost impossible for horses to get through and it was bitterly cold. Shortly after, Harold contracted scarlet fever and passed away suddenly, leaving his young widow to carry on with two small sons to rear. Allan with his wife and three young children now live on their home place. Douglas, now married, lives on another farm and works in Wetaskiwin. Their mother lives in Wetaskiwin.

Helen is the wife of Morley Merner, a long-time businessman in Wetaskiwin.

Phyllis married Carter Hanbary, a lumber man of the West Coast. Bruce took over the home place after his father passed away in 1938. He



married Ethel Sharlow of Wetaskiwin. She was a school teacher before her marriage and taught for some time in the Cherry Grove school. Together they have built an up-to-date farm and have a herd of good Shorthorn cattle as well as a dairy herd. Neatness is their motto as one can see by the appearance of their surroundings. They have three children, Bryan who is keenly interested in the farm and 4-H Club work, and two younger children, Dick and Cathy.

Mrs. Ernest Switzer lives in Wetaskiwin at the home of her daughter and son-in-law, Mr. and Mrs. Morley Merner.

The Amos Doupes were in-laws of the Switzers, so they settled close to each other, buying the  $\frac{1}{4}$  S.W. 23-26-45-W4. They had a family of eight children and they were namely, George, Chester (deceased), Norman (deceased), Mrs. Neil Campbell (deceased), Ella (Mrs. J. Malmas) (deceased), Percy, Milton and Adelaide who lives in Montana. Milton lives with his family on the home place. With such a large family it became necessary to see that the Government built a school and before very long it was built and in use.

The Doupe home was always open to friends and visitors and it soon became a central place for gatherings in the community.

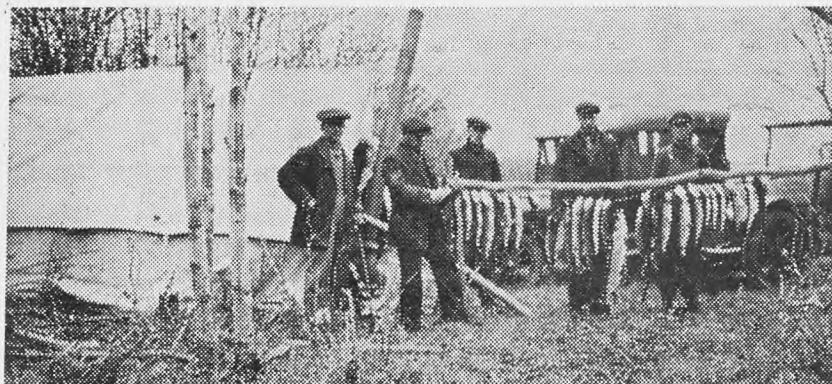
One son, Norman, lived on the home place for several years in a separate house, later on buying the farm where his son Rodney and family now live,  $\frac{1}{4}$  N.E. 23-26-45-W4. Norman married Winnifred Hutchinson who had taught in the Angus Ridge school. They had three children, Lorna, Rodney and Ann and they are all happily married in homes of their own. When Norman and Winnifred moved to their own farm, they built a modern home and were very comfortable. On account of Norman's poor health, they moved to Wetaskiwin and Rodney took over. He and his wife Myrtle and family seem to be doing a good job of it. Norman passed away in 1958 and his widow resides in Calgary.

Milton married Beatrice Price, an English girl who had been keeping house for her uncle Tom Cherrington for three years. They have a family of three daughters, Dorothy, Marjorie and Deanna. These girls have always been right there in any farming enterprise.

In 1938 Deanna accompanied her mother to England where they visited relatives and friends for a couple of months. They were both glad to return to Canada. The family specialize in Hereford cattle and the girls have shown their calves and fat stock at the shows, as soon as they were old enough to do so. They have won many prizes and ribbons.

Marjorie married Murray Stauffer in February, 1960 and Deanna graduated from business college recently. Dorothy is at home and assists her father with the former's work.

Wm. Abbot and family from Ottawa homesteaded the present Tom Cher-



**O. Nieman, Eric Tost, Stan Thirsk, Nick Schreifels and Elton Brandt shown with a fine catch at Buffalo Lake in 1922.**

rington farm W½ 22-45-23-W4 in 1893. He brought the first binder to the district, a five foot Osborne. It was one of the first binders made in Canada to tie its bundles with twine. Speaking of machinery, the Pearsons also report that one of their early threshing machines was horse power, where teams of horses were hooked up to it and walked round and round supplying the needed power. The bands on the sheaves were cut by hand. They also recall a treadle power machine when horses or oxen were used to promote power. Ah! me, what a long way we have come in such a short time and what changes!

In the year 1902 more families came west. Mr. and Mrs. Bright and two sons came from Woodstock, Ontario and lived on a farm just vacated by Mr. Trusdale. This property is now owned by Tom Cherrington who bought it in the early years from George Owens, district auctioneer. The Cherringtons had come from England and the family consisted of Mrs. Cherrington (Tom's mother), Tom, Ted, Louise and Nellie, a sister who arrived later. They lived for a number of years in just a log shack. No screens or screen doors in use and the flies and mosquitoes were terrific, as well as mice. Mrs. Cherrington was a very neat little woman and she scrubbed the rough boards of the floor nearly every day. She would pour a kettle of boiling water over the flies to try and destroy them but she could never tell that she killed any. Tom and Ted never married. Louisa married Charlie Masfin, an Englishman, Nellie married Harold Weaver and they lived at Pendryle. Tom, Ted and several other men of the neighborhood would go on big game hunts every fall, usually bringing home a good supply of meat. A comfortable new house was built in around 1925 and it is a pity that Tom's mother could not have enjoyed living in it.

Tommy's "bluff" a grove of trees was noted for several things. In the summer, in the shade of the trees, community picnics were held and families came from far and near, there was always room for children to play and plenty for everyone to eat. During the winter months, the road going along the bluff was apt to be bad and heavily drifted. Another picnic spot which was quite a favorite was the grove of trees on what is now the Louie Buchner farm. One lady remembers when a sudden rain storm came up, sending the picnickers across the road and into her home for shelter.

Bob Peterson bought the quarter across from Charlie West to the south. He later sold to Nels Anderson and from him Sven Ecklund bought it. This is N.W. ¼ 34-45-23-W4. Mr. and Mrs. Ferdinand Larson and daughter lived in the house for awhile and of late years it has been used as a manse for the minister of New Sweden. The Larsons live in Toronto at the present time.

In 1902. That was the year!

All summer it rained, grain stood lush and bursting with the promise of a bountiful harvest. Then on the afternoon of August 23, 1902, the worst hail storm in the country's history struck with deafening fury, killing wild and tame fowl, blinding stock, ripping the siding from the school house, beating the grain to the ground, stripping trees of their leaves, leaving the settlers discouraged and disappointed.

About this time Nils Anderson came from the U.S. and bought the N.W. ¼ 33-45-23-W4. He was the father of Axel Anderson. Here he raised his family and lived until his death in 1940. That seems a short time ago, but roads were still a worry to the settlers. At the time of his death in March, roads were impassable for cars and the body had to be taken to Wetaskiwin with team and sleigh.

Tom Waterston bought the school section — when it was just raw land, no fences or buildings. He kept it for a number of years and then Noah Kruger bought it from him. Mr. Krueger broke up some of the land. It had a lot of willow and some poplar trees so it took sometime to get the land in shape, with the equipment they had in those days.

In 1942, Louie Buchner bought the property from Mr. Krueger. He had come to this country in June, 1927 from Aufhausen, Germany. He worked

at odd jobs, mostly doing farm work. He married Ina Krueger in 1936 and they lived in various places. For a few months in Millet and then he worked for two years for Frank Ballhorn, living in a house on one of the farms. Then in 1942 they started on their own on the school section. They put up all the buildings on the place and broke every available foot of land. Today they have a neat, well kept progressive looking place. They have four children, Carl, who is 21 and is a machinist by trade; Robert, who assists his father on the farm, when needed and Janet and Marion, who are both going to school.

Louie took a trip back to Germany several years ago and was glad to return to his adopted land.

Before the school section, mentioned above, became fenced, the settlers would drive across it on their way to Wetaskiwin. Short cuts were necessary when one travelled in a wagon or buggy.

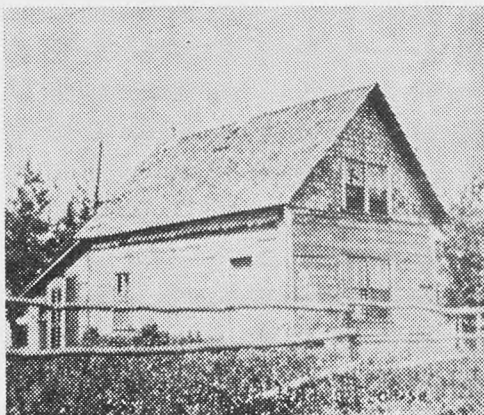
Leslie Shantz married Miss Edith Hutchinson, a music teacher in Wetaskiwin, in 1929. Her family lived in the Battle River district at the time. Leslie and Edith farmed several miles east for a few years before buying land in the Haultain district and making a home there. When Wm. Shantz (an uncle) of the Cherry Grove district retired to Wetaskiwin in 1947, the nephew bought the farm and moved their own house across the river to the new property.

They have three sons, Sidney, who farms close by; Darrell in Red Deer, and Arthur who is now working in Wetaskiwin.

Emil Anderson, son of Mr. and Mrs. A. Anderson who lived just outside the Cherry Grove boundary to the north, married Miss Myrtle Larson of Strome in 1926. Myrtle was teaching school at the time. Following their marriage, the young couple moved to their new home on N.W. 25-45-23-W4. This farm had had several owners or tenants on it previously — among whom were Clarence Pearson, A. Hawkinson and family; William Shantz and at the time of sale to Emil Anderson. It was owned by a bachelor, Oscar Anderson, unrelated to the other Andersons.

Mr. and Mrs. Anderson moved to Wetaskiwin in 1950 but Emil still farms the land. Their three children, Sidney, Eileen and Karen are all married and away from this area.

In 1910 Mr. and Mrs. Claus Ballhorn arrived from Iowa with their family. They first settled in the Angus Ridge district. One daughter, Laura, married to Carl Krutzfeldt settled on S.W. ¼ 28-45-23-W4, formerly homesteaded by Andrew Waterston Jr. Here they lived with their two children, Raymond and Delma. Carl was an expert farmer, put up many new buildings, planting shelter belts and improving the land. Laura was a wonderful cook and manager and could never do enough for someone else. For a number of years they had a fine herd of Hereford cattle. In 1945 they left the farm to the care of their son and moved to a comfortable home in Wetaskiwin. Raymond married Darleen Jeglum that same year. They have one daughter Earleen



A pioneer home.  
Note the rail fence

and four sons, Garry, Bobbie, Jim and Raymond Lee, who keep them busy and interested. Raymond feeds several hundred feeder cattle every year and he and Darleen are good neighbors. Laura and Carl's daughter, Delma spent most of her school days at Cherry Grove and Angus Ridge. She married James Paton in 1936 and lives in Wetaskiwin. Her husband owns a groceteria in that town.

There was Rose and Emil Recknagle, she was the eldest daughter of the Claus Ballhorns. They had a family of five children, Walter, Roland, Vern, Florence and Geneva. They lived for two winters on the quarter east of Krutzfeldts,  $\frac{1}{4}$  S.E. 28-45-23-W4. It was just a shack they went into, but it was surprising how cheerful it could be when it was cleaned to the last board. There was one room down and one upstairs with an open stairway. Rose kept her pots and pans put away under the stairs. There was a heater at one end of the room and the cook stove in the other. The beams in the ceiling were dust catchers and Rose was always chasing dust. She says they were happy there and many an evening when neighbors came in to play Pedro, the children were tucked away in a row, on blankets on the floor. They were always good natured when they were awakened.

Rose and her sister Laura Krutzfeldt were very near to each other and at butchering time or threshing or whatever job it might be, they helped each other. Every day, unless it was very stormy, the father and mother (the Claus Ballhorns) would walk down the road to visit them and so the family circle was a close one.

From 1912 to 1923, Rose and Emil lived on the N.E.  $\frac{1}{4}$  21-45-23-W4. This farm was homesteaded by Mr. Hawkinson. In 1903 it had been bought by Mr. and Mrs. Ed Rix, they planted the spruce trees, still standing today. The Recknagles lived there until 1923 when they moved to a farm closer to town. Roland Recknagle took possession then and later sold it to Raymond Krutzfeldt.

Roland married Cora Treca who was a nurse before her marriage. They lived on the farm 23 years and many a time Cora's training came in handy, when the lambing season was on and she saved many a baby lamb when it arrived in cold weather. They were about the only people in the district who kept a large flock of sheep. They also had a fine herd of purebred shorthorn cattle. Cora and Roland have been spending a number of winters in Long Beach, California. The remainder of the time Roland is in the real estate business in Wetaskiwin.

Going back to the Claus Ballhorns, they moved about several times, living first in Angus Ridge, then on a farm where Frank lived, also, on one of Emil



A family group picture when the buggy was in its heyday.



Recknagle's farms, then a few years in Wetaskiwin, ending up by living in a comfortable cottage on the Carl Krutzfeldt yard. Mrs. Ballhorn did a great deal of crochet work and neighbors far and near were given some of it. She fell and broke her hip and was an invalid for a number of years, during which time her daughter Laura looked after her. She lived to be 87 and spent the last few years with her daughter Rose in Wetaskiwin. Mrs. Ballhorn passed away suddenly at the age of 83.

There was the original Duncan quarter across from Arnolds, N.E. 22-45-23 W. 4. Emil Recknagle bought it from Neil Campbell, who had followed a family by the name of Gunn. Neil had married one of Amos Doupe's daughters, Mabel. They had a family of four girls. Several other families lived there during the years, among them the Tom Whites and a Cecil Shantz family — now the property is rented by Vera Oricson. The buildings have all been taken down or removed.

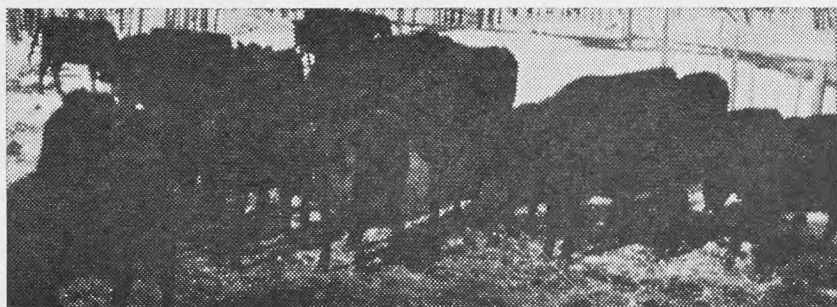
Mr. Hicks homesteaded the N.W. ¼ 28-45-23-W4 in 1893. He was a bachelor and died four years later. The land was then purchased by Wes Dorchester, on it was a little log shack and an outbuilding or two. When Dorchester moved to the Bulvea district, he sold the property to Frank Ballhorn, who had come in from Iowa in 1910. Shelter belts had been planted and are a great protection today. Buildings had also been improved when Frank brought his bride, Hazel Rix in 1919 to the farm. She was the daughter of a pioneer family who had homesteaded at Bears Hill. Before her marriage she worked for Dr. Hoar, a pioneer dentist of Wetaskiwin. They lived there until 1958 when they changed places with their son. Melvin married Bette Bannerman of Wetaskiwin, who was a stenographer for Mr. Manley, Q.C. Bette is noted for her good cooking and her handicraft. They have two children, Wayne, who is very interested in livestock and Agriculture in general. Joan joins her brother in 4-H club work and community projects. Frank and Melvin have a large number of feeder cattle and in 1951 when Princess Elizabeth and the Duke of Edinburgh visited Edmonton, they supplied the beef to be served at the dinner in the Macdonald Hotel. The source of this prime beef which the hotel ordered through Canada Packers, was 10 sides of top quality meat that came from well finished grain fed steer that had been on a feed lot of the Ballhorns for some time. They were commercial cattle and weighed around 1,200 pounds. Frank has been president of the Angus Ridge rural electrification company for several years.

1924 — that was the year!

Cherry Grove for many years had a wonderful ball team and on a Sunday afternoon hundreds of people would gather at their ball diamond which was south of Emil Recknagle's barn. In 1924 they were the champions and winner of the Wetaskiwin Baseball Association Trophy. That year the League consisted of teams from the following districts — Crooked Lake, Gwynne, Bear's Hill, Duhamel and Cherry Grove. Emil Recknagle was team manager and Ernest Switzer was umpire. Names of these illustrious players are as follows: Milton, Percy and Norman Doupe, Harold Switzer, Roland, Verne and Walter Recknagle, Clarence Gould, Paul and August Nowochin. The latter two boys worked in the district.

And so, on this note of fame and glory, let us end our history for the present and hope that

"Though the years may come, and years may go  
Cherry Grove goes on forever."



A herd of purebred cattle in the Angus Ridge district

# Incidents in Pioneer Life



A winter's fuel supply being prepared by Otto and Hugo Nieman.

## GENERAL PIONEER DAYS

By 1900 the land had all been taken up by homesteading, CPR School land or Hudson Bay land. A busy community had sprung up.

The people coming prior to 1900, found there was nothing for them but the land and the open spaces and blue sky. There were no roads, just trails which seemed to lead to nowhere and sometimes ended abruptly. Land had to be broken and that wasn't the easiest thing to do in those days — for plows and machinery of any kind was scarce and the ones that were available were slow in performance as compared to those of today. Shelters had to be built both for man and beast. Logs were hauled from near the river and of course it took days to fell the trees before they were ready to haul. Schools had to be thought of and they also had to be built.

Indians roamed about and you can imagine what the early settlers, especially the women, thought, when they came near. Their dark skins, long braided hair and blankets wrapped around them, moving silently and stealthily in their moccasined feet, were disturbing to say the least.

Stories of the Riel Rebellion still hung over the land like a bad breath and people were just a bit uneasy about their red-skinned brothers. However the Royal Mounted Police kept them well under control and no one was molested.

After the railroad came through to Edmonton from Calgary, everyone breathed more freely and felt that they were not quite at the end of the world. At first the train ran once a week, then twice, and finally ended with a mixed train, passenger and freight, every day. What an assortment

of passengers stepped off at every station! People from the U.S., Eastern Canada and from across the seas, all looking for the Pot of Gold at the end of the rainbow.

Women brought keepsakes from back home — seeds, slips of house plants, quilt patterns and dishes and silver. They put away their pretty straw hats with the flowers on them to replace them with homemade sun bonnets. The dresses, made with the basques and the high collars and floor-length, were replaced with calico ones. Some years later the young girls took them out of their tissue wrappings and tried them on with many a giggle. There was no bobbed hair in those days but long hair pinned up on top of the head with perhaps frizzy bangs. The men, too, we must not forget, wore moustache's (sometimes curled and waxed at the ends) and side burns as well. They even had to have a moustache cup to drink thier tea or coffee.

Life was full indeed—babies were born in those out of the way places with no doctor in attendance. Mrs. Trusdal was one of the wet nurses, doing what she could for many. Sickness came and then life was hard. When scarlet fever struck the settlement there were some who had to give up their loved ones, without having any help from the outside. One family lost two beautiful little girls, at the ages of three and four.

There were long cold winters, with no daily weather reports to go by. The Indians made predictions and the settlers took them as they came. One September a heavy snow storm struck the country with drifts three or four feet deep. The settlers, in a panic, thought winter had set in, and went out with shovels and started digging up their potatoes. After a few days the sun came out bright and warm and the snow all disappeared.

Horses were in great demand and a good team of horses was really worth something. The country was really opened up on horse power. Men, women and children all learned to ride — the women rode side saddle and wore long skirts. A few years later when they started to ride astride, they wore divided skirts. Tie rails and hitching posts were in front of every public place and in every yard.

Tin stove pipes were used in every house and one never heard of as many fires burning the buildings, as one does today.

After the schools were built, more social life came into the community. Dances were held, basket socials and even plays were put on — spelling matches and card parties. In the Fall, when the sloughs frozeover and the ice was smooth, all those who had skates had an evening of good clean fun, by the light of a bonfire or the silvery moonlight.

It was a day of the gramophone and only one or two families had one. It was a treat, when one visited on Sunday afternoon, to hear some of the records played. On Sundays the women generally wore white aprons — long with crocheted lace along the bottom, and tied around the waist. It was said that the women always kept a clean apron hanging behind the kitchen door, and when someone came, they had it handy to tie on.

Picnics were something to look forward to and greatly enjoyed. Baseball teams were organized.

During the long winter evenings by the light from the coal-oil lamps, the women would work at their quilt patches or make rugs. In fact, many had brought rag carpets wit hthem and as soon as they had a suitable floor, they were stretched across the floor and tacked down at the edges. Nearly everyone had a carpet stretcher and a tack hammer in those days. One lady had brought her accordion with her, and in the evening she would play many of the old tunes, "Darling Nellie Gray, Mocking Bird, Oh Dem Golden Slippers" and many others. The family gathered round, father smoking his pipe and the children keeping step with the music.

The first settler's greatest worry was the water problem, especially drinking water. Water was often hauled from the river or a slough for general purposes. Finally wells were dug and the water brought to the surface with a rope and pail. Then the pumps began to appear, and it was a job for young and old, to pump the water into the old wooden troughs for the horses and cattle. Then very soon Wind Mills were put up and they became landmarks and weather vanes all in one. When the wind blew, there

was lots of water. On quiet days, there was none. Then came gasoline engines and things were becoming easier. Meanwhile, drilled wells had become common and at the depth of 125 to 200 feet, good water was obtained.

To the early settler no one seemed to mind going to bed by the light of a candle. Lamp chimney washing and polishing was an every day chore. Kerosene lanterns were used to give light in the stables. Then came the Rayo and Aladdin lamps with the round burners, and then the gas lamps with the mantles (a moth would break them to bits). After a while, the people began putting in their own light plants. They were operated with battery sets and wind chargers — how wonderful that light was!! Today, every electrical appliance is installed on most of these farms, through the use of Calgary Power.

The pioneer homes had no basement, such as we have today. Generally a hole was dug under the centre of the house and there the vegetables were put for the winter. One never heard of vegetables spoiling — carrots, if there were any left, were still firm and good in June. The women hung the milk and cream and other foods, down in the well pit, to keep cool, or perhaps they had a box dug in the ground, on the north side of the house, where they kept butter, etc.

The work of churning butter has almost faded entirely out of the picture for the rural housewife. Cream was put in a wooden barrel churn and turned over and over, until you could hear, by the thump, thump, that butter had come — meanwhile, the lid of the churn had been lifted several times, to let the gas escape. The buttermilk was saved and used for many things in baking — delicious pancakes were those made out of buttermilk.

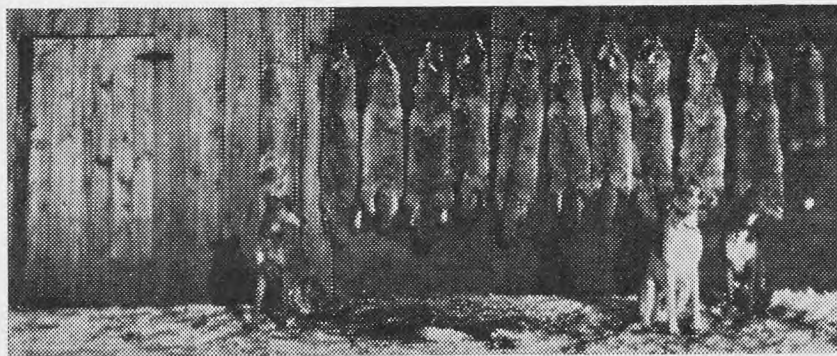
Roads were real problems, especially during wet seasons — they made corduroy roads when there was no other way. There were spots where there was nothing but gumbo soil and when it was wet, it could stick harder than glue. Even wagon and buggy wheels became clogged and refused to turn. If one stepped out into the mud, one's feet became weighted down. In the winter, travelling could be just as bad. The weather was changeable then as now and often a family would drive to Wetaskiwin with a team and sleigh. The weather was mild and calm when they started, but before they had gone many miles on their return trip, a blizzard had developed and it was much colder. How good it was to reach home!

When occasions arose, such as accidents or sickness, in the neighborhood, and roads were impassable for one outfit to make it alone the neighbors turned out in force, with teams and shovels, and got the patient to a doctor.

When the roads finally were graded, they dried off much more quickly, and when they became gravelled the people from the country really began to enjoy their cars.

Grain was generally hauled to market in Wetaskiwin during the winter months, when sleighs could be used. Likewise, hogs would be taken to market. Some days a dozen grain tanks, drawn by horses, were seen passing. Cattle were often driven into market. On those days the livery stable did a wholesale business and the blacksmith also was kept busy shoeing horses.

For many years, the only source of fuel, for heating the homes was

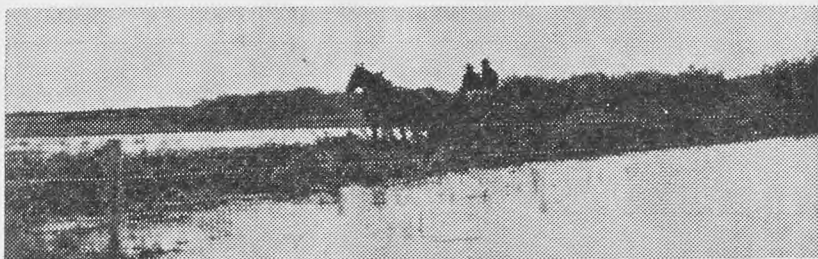


**Trophies of the hunt in 1925. Ten coyotes and one black fox**



wood. It had to be cut and hauled, sawed and split. Buck saws were used at first — today, they are almost antique! When coal mines were discovered at Bears Hill and at Camrose, many used the coal from there. Later when trucks became more common, coal was hauled directly from the mines near Edmonton. One had to get up early to be at the mine at six in the morning, before the line-up got too long. It seemed that everyone wanted coal in those days at the same time.

There was the rural mailman and it is hard to describe what hardships our early mailmen went through to deliver the mail to the people who were anxiously awaiting news from the outside world. Three times a week, in good or bad weather he came. One winter, I remember, it was forty-eight



A "corduroy" bridge spans a slough south of Wetaskiwin in the early days

below zero but he made his trip of fifty miles with a sleigh and team. At times during the spring break-up, the mail was delivered by horseback. When anyone saw him coming in the distance, they would don coat, cap and mitts and rush out to meet him. Today, the mailman still comes three times a week, in a car which has a radio and a heater.

Good gravel had been discovered in the Battle River, near the Latimer place and people began hauling loads on sleighs during the winter months, to spread around in their yards and driveways. The trip usually took all day—today a half dozen loads can be hauled by truck, in the same time.

Another thing that many people used in their homes, was a coffee grinder. Coffee beans were purchased and many people used the green beans and roasted them in the oven themselves. Ground coffee was almost unheard of and so the coffee grinder came in handy. There are still some to be found in the district.

Every woman owned a "curling iron" which she would heat by putting it in the lamp chimney and then proceed to curl her hair. Where did all those curling irons go? It was also the day of the cuspidor or "spittoon." Usually enamel or granite some were made of elaborate china. They, too, have disappeared. Button shoes, for both men and women, were also the rage and every household boasted a button hook or two. In some cases every member of the household had one. Now they too belong to the past.

And those long dangly skirts to tussle with while out doing chores; I'm sure they would have fainted right away had they suddenly seen a woman dressed in slacks or pedal pushers of today.

What did they do without refrigerators or deep freezers? Well, they hung things down in the well pits or dug a hole in the ground and put things there, never even dreaming of the fridges or the freezers of today. Many didn't even have a cellar the first years — that came later.



A typical farm dwelling around 1900



**ANNIE NIEMAN 1906**

A living room typical of the turn of the century is depicted in this picture.

Notice the young lady's dress, with the skirt sweeping the floor. Her high collar and full sleeves were considered very smart. Her shoes were very likely high button or laced, and I'll wager her stockings were black and most likely cotton.

The organ with its ornate carving must have been an elegant piece of furniture.

The Nottingham lace curtain was quite a background for the gramophone. The centre table was found in nearly every home. Notice the clock on the shelf and the shelf scarf with its embroidery. The picture on the wall near the clock was hung high and was slightly tilted as most of them were in those days. The paper rack was something, too, of another day. The lady's fan was quite in style and added charm. The mat on which she was standing was made out of old woollen pieces and the edges finished with bright yarns.

## HANDICRAFT IN THE COMMUNITY

Through the ages it has always been a woman's privilege and pleasure to make and plan things to add interest and beauty to her home. No matter how humble her home, there is always some sign of her handicrafts. So it was with our pioneer women, as soon as they had a roof over their heads they started to make something with their hands. Many brought precious keepsakes and things from their old homes.

There was never a scrap of anything wasted, for quilt tops could be made out of the smallest pieces. And believe me quilts were made, by the hundreds, out of all sorts of materials, calico, velvets and silk. Log cabin, Double wedding ring, Turkey Trot, Jacob's Ladder, Pine Tree, Dresden Plate and many, many other patchwork patterns were used. Those made out of velvet or silk scraps were done in crazy pattern and finished with a colored heavy thread in feather stitch, chain, herring bone, seed, French knots, daisy, cross stitch and many others.

Carpets used in those days were mostly rag carpets, woven on a loom with colored warp. The woven strips were then sewn together and stretched tight to the edges of the room. One or two looms had come with the settlers and they were in great demand by the women of the district. Evenings were spent cutting the rags into strips and sewing them together and wrapping the sewn pieces into neat balls. Rugs of all kinds were made, braided, crocheted and hooked and others made out of pieces of old worn out trousers, sown on an oval piece of material and finished with a blanket stitch in bright colors.

Several women owned a spinning wheel and yarns were spun and made up into clothing. Knitting was almost a necessity, not for making so many fancy things but for practical, useful garments. In fact most of the clothing worn, was made by the women, even the men's work shirts, jackets and trousers.

Lace work of all kinds was done. One pattern which was outstanding in our home was called Popcorn lace. Drawn work and hardanger was beautiful work done by clever hands. Corset covers, which were much in vogue, were often made entirely of crocheted lace. One I had was made in the Spider lace pattern.

Picture frames were made out of paste board and wrapped with variegated thread. Huckaback towelling was used to make cushion tops with colored thread woven in and out in pleasing designs.

Pillow shams are something of the past. Some were very elaborate, done in tucks, embroidery or lace. They covered the bed pillows during the day. Then there was the "splasher" for the back of the wash stand. It was very often covered with a crocheted cover.

Many feather ticks were used on the beds, especially if the people who owned them had come from across the seas. They were generally made of stripped goose feathers and were light as down to sleep on but the beds were difficult to make up where they were used. Feather stripping was the procedure of taking all the soft, downy part of the feather off of the main quill. This is a big job, but when a room is cleared of most furniture several people can do a large quantity in an evening. I have in my home, a pair of pillows, which are made of hand woven ticking and are filled with stripped goose feathers.

There was also the job of washing raw wool which was really dirty when it came from the sheep. In the old days it was usually washed in cold water. After the washing and drying came the carding, which was done by small hand carders. I remember I did enough one winter to make four comforters. The wool came out fluffy, soft and white. Wool comforters were in great demand and were cozy to sleep under on a cold winter's night.

As there was no Kleenex in those days, handkerchiefs were in constant use and many of them were made by hand. Some, for genteel occasions were finished with a crocheted or tatted lace edge. White aprons were quite the thing and were worn as long as dress skirts and finished across the bottoms with embroidery or wide crocheted lace. Fancy little aprons (which we some-

times called "Belly Patches") were just big enough to suit that name and were also done with embroidery or lace. Children's aprons were called pinafores and were also elaborately trimmed.

In those days, artificial flowers were not on the market like they are today, so that was another art in which many women tried their hand. Roses and lilies were generally their specialty and made out of crepe paper. Some women also became quite adept at making things out of empty thread spools. Such things as small "What nots", plaques, etc. were made from them.

A sampler hung in nearly every home and was done by hand, often in cross stitch. A favorite, bore the inscription, "God Bless our Home". One I always liked and which hung in our home was "Joy be with you while you stay, Peace be with you on your way."

Hair pin lace was a favorite too, which any child could learn to do. Crocheted and knitted doilies of all kinds were made. "Fascinators" were made for the girls and women out of wool yarns and were quite attractive. Some women even tried their hands at tanning the skins of muskrats and rabbits and making the skins up into muffs, collars, etc.

Antimacassars, were small covers made to fasten on the backs of chairs or sofas to keep the hair oil from soiling the material. These were made of various materials, embroidered or crocheted, knitted.

Dust caps or boudoir caps were owned by nearly every woman and nearly always made by hand and often trimmed with lace and ribbon.

Candlewick bed spreads were first made by hand and never seemed to wear out. Embroidered spreads were very elaborate and often were made out of unbleached muslin. These are some of the handicrafts that our first women pioneers indulged in, some of necessity and some for the pleasure derived from doing them. Today, our women are still doing handicrafts-making quilts, rugs and many more things that are somewhat different to what our pioneers did. For instance now they do leather work, basketry, copper, weaving, ceramics, shell work and many more. Today they learn their handicrafts from trained instructors and through the advantages of demonstrations.

The Angus Ridge W.I. became noted for their fine handicraft. Miss Agnes Baily, Mrs. Gordon Thrisk and Mrs. Ekroth attended the Banff School of Fine Arts on scholarships obtained by the Angus Ridge W.I. for their handicraft.

One of Mrs. Angus' prize hooked rugs and Mrs. Gwen Angus' quilt were sent to Scotland where they were exhibited at the National Handicraft Exhibition.

Many demonstrations were held by the Institute, namely millinery, basketry, spinning, rug making, crochet work and knitting. A loom was purchased by the W.I. and a number of the members have availed themselves of the privilege of using it and turning out some fine work. One of the members of the Angus Ridge W.I., Miss Agnes Baily, has been Convenor of Handicraft for the Alberta Provincial Women's Institute for the past four years.

Recently Mrs. Grant won second prize on her appliqued quilt in the Star Weekly Contest in Toronto. This was a Canada-wide contest.

About the same time an appliqued quilt, made by the members of the Angus Ridge W.I. won second prize in the Salada Tea contest at the A.W.I. Convention in Edmonton.

Four years ago, when ten first prize articles at the A.W.I. Convention were sent to be put on display at the F.W.I.C. Convention in Ottawa, Angus Ridge W.I. was again honored. White embroidered pillow slips made by Miss Agnes Bailey, and a handkerchief with a crocheted edge, made by Mrs. William Nelles, were two of the ten articles sent.

Several members of the Angus Ridge W.I. became very proficient at the art of petit point and needle-point, and many beautiful pictures made by them are to be seen in the homes today.



## BERRY PICKING

Wild fruit grew in abundance, such as strawberries, raspberries, saskatoons, chokecherries and cranberries. Blueberries also grew thickly in some parts of the country.

The women and children would spend most of their spare time during the summer and early fall picking and processing the fruit for winter.

If the berries grew near, they could take their pails and the family dog and walk to the patches. Raspberries grew on the sunny side of brush land or on stumps and pails were generally filled before returning. Strawberries were found in the tall grass in the meadows and delicious was the flavor of this berry. I know families who at times picked and canned thirty or forty quarts. Saskatoons were more abundant some years than others, when the year was good they hung on the bushes like grapes on a vine, large juicy and delicious. Some grew on low bushes and others on tall trees and they were so plentiful that the settlers did not stop with pails but filled tubs as well. There was a way of drying most of these fruits in the real early days and they seemed to retain their flavor and color. After sugar was easier to buy, jelly making and preserving was done.

Some days whole families travelled in a wagon to go berry picking. What fun it was to hunt the patches and proceed to fill the pails. Lusty voices called out to each other and the dog would scout here and there, scaring a bush rabbit on his way, then rushing back with his tongue hanging out, to lie at the foot of his master.

They had to watch out for wasps or hornets but it is surprising how they escaped with only an occasional sting.

Sometimes a family of skunks would cross their path but the black and white creatures would hurry by with never a backward fling. In the very early days bears had been seen in the raspberry patches. Pickers also had been known to fall and stumble over the underbrush and spill whole pails of their berries—that was a real catastrophe. Children, too, had been known to wander away from their elders and a panicky time would follow until they were found.

However, those berry picking times were days to remember and to look forward to each year.

## PICNICS

The day of real honest to goodness picnics, seems to have faded into the past.

That was one of the things that our pioneer people enjoyed. Some of these were held by the river and others on the S.E. quarter of the school section 29, across from where Raymond Krutzfeldt now lives and on the land which L. Buchner now owns.

Word would be passed along, from neighbor to neighbor and when the day arrived—families would put on their Sunday best—horses hitched to the wagons or democrats and after baskets and boxes of food had been loaded, away they went, rattlely bang, bumpety bump over the prairie trail to the picnic grounds.

When boards could not be found to provide tables, then cloths were spread on a grassy plot of ground and soon it was piled high with home cooked food—bread and buns and pies and potato salad and roast of venison or beef—cookies and layer cakes. The children had one grand time, eating of the food, until their stomach's ached and their eyes bulged. Men, as they do now, let the ladies wait on them and then gathered in groups and told many stories of their experiences.

After the women had waited on the men and the children, they ate their meal in leisure, while they discussed many things. The women wore long dresses, with high necks and long full sleeves—the men, if it was a nice day, were in shirt sleeves, and vest and trousers—wearing bowler hats or straw sailors.

Later perhaps they played ball and the young ones ran races. A rustic platform may have been fixed up, covered with poplar boughs, and here, perhaps, a fiddler sat and played the old tunes of yesteryear—and if the grass wasn't too bumpy the boys and girls would try a dance or so.

When the evening shadows began to fall, children and empty lunch baskets were rounded up and families were homeward bound.

## THE BIRTH OF A BABY

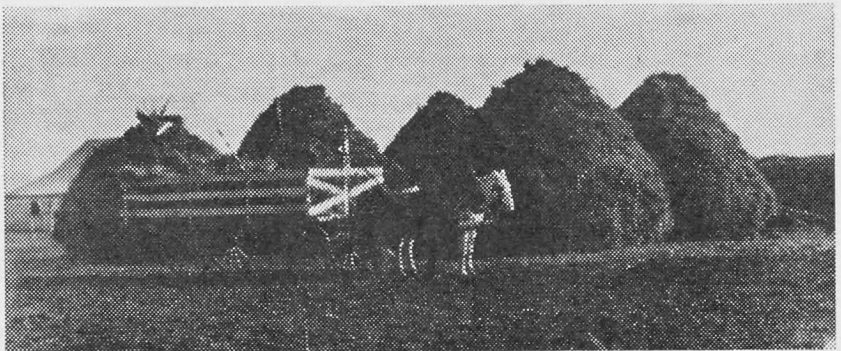
Early in 1894 Charles and Susan Nelles were expecting their second child. Nellie was going on two years old and they were looking forward to having a playmate for her. One day Charlie came in from the field to find Susan sick and in pain. Her brother, Bill Schantz was quickly dispatched to fetch his mother, Mrs. Christian Schantz, who lived about two miles away. In those early days one woman assisted another in times of childbirth.

Susan continued in pain all during that long night and part of the next day, before the worried family decided that nature was not following its regular course; and that medical assistance would have to be had. The nearest doctor was in Edmonton, over forty miles away. It meant driving a team over that long rough trail, and the question was, could the trip be made in time? Charlie started out, hating to leave his wife in such a condition but feeling that he could make the trip faster than anyone else.

He changed horses in Wetaskiwin and continued on his way, not sparing the horses, yet holding them in enough, so that they could withstand the trip. Dr. Braithwaite, a young man who was the only doctor in Edmonton was found and the return trip began. (Dr. Braithwaite passed away a few years ago. For many years he was Coroner in Edmonton. He officiated at the opening of the Wetaskiwin Community Hospital.)

The return journey was made as speedily as possible and the following day Susan was delivered of a big baby girl, but there was no joy in it, for the child was dead. Susan herself was very ill, but after a time she fully recovered her health and strength.

The men of the family built a little coffin and, as there was no minister in this part of the country at the time, Christian Schantz, grandfather of the baby, read from the Bible and performed the burial service. The child's body lies in a little grave in the grove of trees just east of the house on the old Nelles homestead.



Stacking barley in 1907.

## THE FIRE

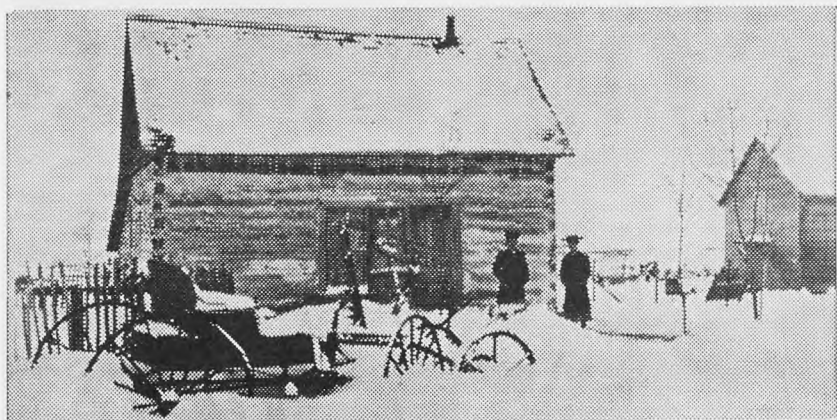
It was a Sunday morning in the fall of 1906. The men were sleeping in much later than usual, as all were very tired after threshing for long hours all week. Mrs. Charlie Nelles was up and about to get breakfast when she smelled smoke coming in on a north-west wind. Fire in these early days was a big hazard and caused terror as there was nothing to stop it once it got started. This one had got started, for when Mrs. Nelles went out to look, the smoke was billowing towards her home. Just one scream of "Fire" from her, and her brother, William (Bill) Schantz, as well as the rest of the family were bounding out of bed. The two men pulled on shirts and pants and away they went. They wore no shoes all that day.

The fire had originated at the farm of William Bright who lived on what is now Tom Cherrington's south quarter. Ed Rix was working for him at the time. The day before he had set fire to a straw stack, against the wishes of Mr. Bright who feared what might happen. And early this Sunday morning it did happen. There was a strong wind which fanned the embers into a fierce blaze and soon the nearby stubble and then the grass was burning.

In the path of the fire were hay stacks, grain stacks and the threshing outfit, as well as the Nelles home and buildings. The men hastily hitched up the horses to plough fire-guards, but their guards were very ineffectual. As the fire jumped one guard, they plowed another to try to save the next stack, but all to no avail. The threshing was done by horse power in those days and the horse power rig was of course firmly staked to the ground. This had to be pulled up and hauled away. The women worked side by side with the men, hauling water from the well and slough and helping in every way they could. Relatives and neighbors came to join in the fight. Ed and Bill Wilson were there with their threshing crew, but the hours went by and the fire kept pressing forward to take everything in its path.

Somehow the wind veered enough so that the fire missed the Nelles buildings, but it burned all the hay, grain and an old grainery on what is now the farm of Bill Nelles. It roared away to the south-east. It missed the Schantz place, which is now the home of Homer Schantz, and finally crossed the Battle River at the old Wolter's farm late that afternoon. How far it went from there or what havoc it then wrought my informant could not remember.

Wild grass was very abundant in those early days and the settlers depended on it for feed, but now everything was a blackened barren land. The whole year's labor was lost and there was no grain to feed or sell, nor wheat to have ground into flour. It was indeed a fatigued and despondent lot who saw that Sunday come to a close, but still they could remember to be thankful that they had not lost their home and belongings against one of nature's most destructful weapons—fire.



A typical winter scene on the Nieman farm.  
Mrs. John Nieman and Ellen at front door.

## A TRIP FROM ANGUS RIDGE TO EDMONTON

Edmonton was installing electric lights. Bob Angus was not making too much money farming and decided he would like to try to get a job helping to install those electric lights. So he asked Ed. Wilson, a boy of nine or ten, if he would accompany him to Edmonton to return with the horse and cart, should he, Bob, procure work. Ed. was quite excited at the prospect of the trip and asked his parents' consent, which was granted.

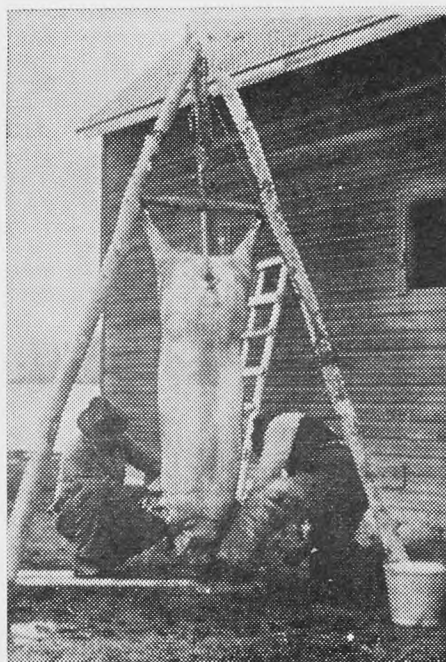
So, early one morning Bob and Ed. set out with the old horse and a two wheeled cart. Progress was slow over the rutty trail, and, in the areas of what we now know as Millet and Leduc, there was much swampy country to cross. The poor old horse got stuck many times and the travellers would be forced to dismount and help him pull out the cart. The hours went by much faster than the miles and darkness came upon them quite a few miles on this side of Edmonton.

After dark it was hard to distinguish the trails and Bob would strike matches and the two of them would examine the tracks to see which looked like the right ones. Finally they came to a cabin and they went to the door to ask the way. This was the home of a half-breed and he insisted the two had come to harm him. Finally he opened the door and out jumped a dog. Bob drew his ever-present gun and threatened to shoot the dog if its owner did not call it in. The half-breed became frightened, called his dog, and gave directions to Edmonton.

The stopping place in Edmonton was at the home of friends of Bob Angus, somewhere in the vicinity of the Low Level Bridge which was all farming country at that time. Ed. Wilson was quartered with a boy about his own age.

Next day Bob went to see about getting a job and Ed. and his new friend played along the river. Near where the Fifth Street Bridge is now, Tom knew of a boat he could use. The two got in and started to row, but the current was strong, and they drifted down stream. They reached the opposite shore at about the McDougal Hill. The two returned safely across the river later in the day.

Bob Angus and his friend returned that night, but no jobs were available so Bob decided to return home. Ed was quite elated about this news as he had not been feeling very happy about the prospects of the trip home alone.



Butchering on the farm, 1908



## CATTLE CROSSING THE RIVER

During the summer in the early days the cattle wandered considerable distances from home, but the men kept track of them and left them to eat where the grazing was best.

It was late in the fall of 1898, after the first snow that the men went to bring home the cattle belonging to the Schantz and Nelles families. The river was very high as the wet years had come following the previously very dry ones. There was snow-covered ice on the river but the rapids were open, and it was here that the men crossed on their horses and returned again with the cattle.

The animals were wild and hard to handle. Once they got across the river some wanted to go back but the men held them in check, until two big steers finally broke away. They dashed off through the trees, the men in hot pursuit, down the bank they went and when they hit the snow-covered ice they skidded far out. But, alas, the ice was not yet deep enough to hold such a weight. It broke and down into the deep water and current went the two steers. The men could only watch their struggles from the bank as there was nothing they could do. That fall there were two steers less to go to market.

## THE NORTH-WEST MOUNTED POLICE

The North-West Mounted Police arrived in this district in 1894. They were stationed at the home of Christian Schantz, Sr., now the farm of Homer Schantz. One of their chief duties was to keep watch on the Indians, who were forever leaving the reservations and roaming around in bands. They delighted in setting fires and they didn't mind if these fires burned out the white settlers. However, they knew that the NWMP could punish them and so these uniformed men were held in much respect.

One of these men of the law, Sgt. Featherston was a very capable man and fulfilled his duty better than many others. One day he caught a band of 23 Indians setting a fire across the river. After putting the fire out, he forced them to return with him to the Schantz place. There the trail forked—one fork leading to the reserve and the other to Wetaskiwin. The Indians insisted on going to the Reserve, but Sgt. Featherston told them they were to go to Wetaskiwin to be punished. It was a toss-up who was going to win until the Sgt. laid his rifle across the saddle in front of him, and riding up to the lead Indian put his pistol to the Indian's ear and told him that he lead his band to Wetaskiwin or he would pull the trigger. The Indian turned his horse and called the others to follow him to Wetaskiwin.

The Indians gave the Mountie a bad time along the way but he did not show any signs of fear and so he finally delivered them to headquarters. They were severely reprimanded and then were allowed to return to the Reservation.

These officers of the law were good men generally, but there were a few among them who did not fulfill the oath of their office as they should. As one old-timer put it "some of those North-West Mounted Police were just no good." They had rigid rules to follow too; one rule was that they must not use their horses except when on duty. One young officer was forever breaking this rule. One day when his horse should have been in the stable, he was riding him and the horse fell. The rider broke an ankle in the fall and for this his superiors severely reprimanded him.

## RELIGIOUS LIFE IN THE COMMUNITY

The early pioneers in this country sorely missed church services and the Sunday Schools for their children. People of many religious beliefs came to this part of the country and it was hard to find ministers. Gradually young student ministers began to come west. They did not stay long in one place, but when they did stop in a community, they were welcomed, even if the services had to be held in the homes.

One of the first ministers was stationed at Duhamel and he travelled about the country on horseback, holding services wherever he was required. The Battle River School, built in 1894, was the first public building in the community in which he held church services. Many young men, in the years to come, held services there too. They usually stayed at the Charlie Nelles home while in the district.

A number of members of the Plymouth Brethren sect in the Bears Hill area held services and prayer meetings in the homes.

Mr. Glass, the first Methodist minister on the adjoining Indian reservation, went out into the districts off the reservations and held services and prayer meetings in the homes.

Soon after the Cherry Grove School was built in 1902 church services were held there with a minister by the name of Mr. Robinson. He was the brother of the late George Robinson who lived for so many years in Wetaskiwin. People for miles around gathered on a Sunday to hear his sermons.

Sometimes ministers stationed in this area held services on alternate Sundays — one Sunday a Methodist and the next a Presbyterian. Mr. John Morrow of Wetaskiwin held services at Angus Ridge after the school was built there in 1903. His congregations were under the jurisdiction of the Lacombe Presbytery.

Mr. John McVicar, teacher of the Battle River school, organized Sunday School classes there, and many children from the district attended regularly.

Mr. C. E. Pocock, who lived at Duhamel, came to this community to hold services in the schools. He is now living in retirement at Sylvan Lake, Alberta.

In later years, ministers from Wetaskiwin United Church held services in the country on Sunday afternoons and especially in the Angus Ridge school. Some of these were — Mr. Perry, Mr. Pritchard, Mr. A. L. Elliot, and Mr. Cann. Sunday School classes were also held at Angus Ridge under the direction of Miss M. McLean when she was teaching in the district. Later Mrs. Roy Ballhorn conducted Sunday school classes there.

At the present time some children go to the New Sweden Mission Church, some go to Wetaskiwin and some are picked up by a school bus and taken to the Malmo Covenant Church for Sunday School classes. At least one child is taking lessons by correspondence.

## THE WOMEN'S MISSIONARY SOCIETY

In 1916 the Battle River Missionary Society was organized by Mrs. H. J. Montgomery. The purpose was to enable women from all religious denominations in the community to keep in touch with the work of the churches.

Mrs. John Arnold was elected President, which office she held until her death in 1946. Mrs. Chris Shantz was first Vice-President, Mrs. Ed. Wilson was Secretary-Treasurer and Mrs. Ernest Switzer was appointed her assistant. These ladies held office until shortly before 1946 when Mrs. Lloyd Shantz (nee Caroline Dorchester) was elected to that office. Upon the death of Mrs. Arnold the group was disbanded as the membership had dwindled to only a few.

The first members of the Battle River Women's Missionary Society were: Mrs. C. Nelles, Mrs. A. Beller, Miss Mary Nelles, Mrs. G. Anderson, Mrs. G. Anderson, Mrs. W. Shantz, Mrs. W. J. Wilson, Mrs. J. Arnold, Mrs. E. Switzer, Mrs. A. Doupe, Mrs. E. Wilson, Mrs. N. Krueger, Miss G. Thirsk, Mrs. Wm. Thirsk, Mrs. E. Brandt, Mrs. J. Thirsk, Mrs. Thos. Haigh, Mrs. G. Shantz.

## NEW SWEDEN MISSION CHURCH

The New Sweden Mission Church situated seven miles south east of Wetaskiwin had its beginning on May 26th, 1894. Several months later a constitution was drawn up and adopted. The Church Board, elected December 22, 1895, consisting of Ludwig Peterson, John Engstrom, K. J. Bjorkgren, John Berg and Anton Anderson began to work in earnest, for it was realized that a church building would soon be necessary. Church services up to this time had been held in the homes, and the men of the district acted as pastors. Some of these district pastors were John Berg, John Bergman, O. Evenson and John Nelson.

As soon as the building program was decided on, the men pitched in to haul by team the hand hewn, hand trimmed logs to the church site. These logs exist today as girds in the present church. This building was forty-two feet long and twenty-five feet wide. The first service was held in the new Church July 19th, 1896 and later that year the first pastor, Rev. Linde came to serve the church and community for two years before moving on.

Rev. G. A. Sanden was then called and he remained for six years, serving both New Sweden and the newly formed Malmo church, then known as Lewisville.

In 1904 approximately 40 acres of land was purchased adjoining the church for the building of a parsonage. This parsonage was finished in 1905.

It was in 1906 that this church joined the Congregational Union of Canada and that same year Rev. Sanden left and Rev. C. G. Anderson replaced him. Rev. C. G. Anderson set a record for the longest service rendered by any one pastor in the New Sweden Church. He resigned in 1918 to be replaced by a fiery preacher, Rev. Rudolph Peterson. Rev. Peterson remained for two years before returning to Sweden where he is still ministering. Mr. Leonard Quanstrom and Rev. Enoch Swanson were the succeeding pastors.

In 1926 it was decided to start a Mission Church in Wetaskiwin. It was completed in 1932 with Rev. Arvid Wickstrom in charge of both churches.

The names of the succeeding pastors of the New Sweden Church were Rev. Landerdale and Rev. D. N. Erikson, who now lives in the Malmo district. It was during his term that the Malmo Church became independent of New Sweden and Wetaskiwin. Rev. Erikson went there to take charge.

Following Rev. Erikson came Rev. R. T. Merrill, Rev. A. E. Koch, Rev.



Ed Bye and Hannah Johnson of the New Sweden district pledge their marriage vows in 1900.

Elmer Snider and Rev. W. Klassen. During the time of this latter minister, it was decided that Wetaskiwin and New Sweden have separate ministers, so Rev. Don Jost was called to New Sweden in 1953. He served until 1957 when Rev. Gordon Dennison came to take his place.

There is only one man living now who was present at the building of the first Church in 1894, and he is Mr. Gustav Johnson who is now ninety-two years of age and he still lives in the district.

The first services were all in the Swedish language as the early settlers of the district were all from Sweden, and so the Church was called New Sweden, as it still is today.

The present day church has electric lights, gas heating, a cement basement and an addition of two Sunday school rooms in the rear.

During the summer and winter of 1959 and 1960, a new parsonage was built beside the church. It was truly a labor of love, as so many willing hands assisted with the building. It was ready to move into when Rev. Peter Eckert of Calgary was called to take over the pastoral duties of the church.

### NEW SWEDEN LADIES AID

The first Ladies Aid group was formed in the year 1897 with five ladies attending the first meeting which was held on June 19th at the church. These five ladies were Mrs. Sel Johnson, Mrs. Hanna Peterson, Mrs. Matilda Berg, Mrs. Hanna Johnson and Mrs. August Anderson. These meetings were all in Swedish as these people were all of Scandinavian descent. This group was called "Sewing Circle" but it was later changed to Ladies Aid Meeting. The next meeting saw Mrs. Ida Peterson and Mrs. Hanna Anderson join, making seven members and as the meetings progressed more women joined. Mrs. Sel Johnson was the first President and Mrs. Gustav Johnson was the first Secretary. These women knitted and sewed. Some donated wool and other spun and knitted socks and mitts for a sale. The first sale netted thirty-one dollars and fifteen cents. An organ was badly needed for the Church so one was found that cost forty-one dollars. Twenty dollars was donated to the organ fund. There was a little money left over and with this they purchased two rockers. These were given to Mr. Berg and Mr. Peterson as these two men were their alternating pastors as well as being farmers. These women showed their appreciation for their services by giving them these rockers as manufactured furniture was very rare.

Most of the worries of these ladies was to help pay the minister and furnish the church. In 1900 their sale netted \$58.75 and they sent \$10.00 to Children's Orphan Home in Philadelphia and \$10.00 to Seamen's Home in Boston. In later years quilts were made out of wool and these were auctioned off for the price of seven to ten dollars. Raw wool was bought for seven to ten cents a pound.

These ladies would gather quite regularly for what they called "Spinning Meetings" at which time they came in the mornings and they would card and spin wool for their sales.

In 1903 the membership was seventeen ladies. In 1904 they started taking up what they called "coffee money" at their meetings. This brought in anywhere from 35 cents to \$1.35. In that year they bought a wool plush rug for the pulpit and they were very proud of it. The sum of \$17.00 was what it cost.

During the later years their projects were to paint the Church, buy a new pump and two new coaloil lamps for the Church, as well as to help support the minister.

In 1908 they bought draperies for a room in the hospital for the sum of \$5.755. The hospital was north of of Court House on 49 Avenue 47th Street then, which was really a house. They donated to the hospital after that for several years and when there was talk of buildings a real hospital in Wetaskiwin the Malmo Ladies Aid together with New Sweden Ladies Aid gathered money to buy some furniture.

The New Sweden Ladies aid still hold monthly meetings, only now they are in English instead of Swedish. There are often 15 members.



## HEALTH IN THE COMMUNITY

Early in the 1890's Dr. Wyld came to this area and for a time lived on the Riverside farm with his brother. He visited very ill patients, but those who were able to withstand the jolting of a wagon over rough trails were taken to see him at his home.

Dr. Sharpe was the first resident physician in Wetaskiwin and he also did dental work. His offices were upstairs in the Ambler building, just west of what is now the Banner Store owned by Aboussafy's.

Next came Dr. Baldwin who had just quit the RNWMP force and who opened an office in Ward's drug store.

A young man, Mr. Gibson, who was working towards his medical degree came out to teach school in the Cherry Grove District. He received an emergency call from the Switzer family one morning, to deliver their first child. Due to his excitement over the event he declared a school holiday that day.

An English Chemist, J. H. Walker, who had operated a business in Liverpool, England, twelve years was the first to open a drug store in Wetaskiwin. His place of business was near the present site of Montgomery's. As there was no doctor at the time, he not only filled the prescriptions, but prescribed them as well. He refused medicine to no one, and he and his wife helped the ailing throughout this whole area.

In 1899 during a threatened small-pox outbreak, one man, a Mr. David died in the Cherry Grove district and was buried on his own property.

A Scarlet Fever epidemic broke out in 1904. Mr. and Mrs. R. M. (Bob) Angus lost two small girls, one three and one seven years of age. A Mr. Jones was the only other one present to help Mr. Angus at the burial.

Another very serious epidemic broke out in 1918-1919. It was the Influenza or "Flu" as it is now called. Whole families would be down at one time. Neighbors helped each other as much as possible in this crisis. Many horses in the country were kept harnessed for days and nights at a time, for no one knew when it would be necessary to go for a doctor if a case should become really serious. That winter the livestock went quite often without their regular feeding, watering or milking. During the epidemic it was unlawful for anyone to be in a public place without wearing a mask. Many people burned formaldehyde or creosol on the stoves hoping it would kill the germs. Requests were made for volunteers to help nurse the sick Miss Lillian Bailey offered her services.

Among the early doctors in Wetaskiwin were Dr. Walker, Dr. Norbye, Dr. Stevenson and Dr. Robertson.

Baby Clinics were held several times in the Angus Ridge Hall and in 1931 a Clinic for school children was held. Angus and Battle River were two of the schools which were visited by a doctor.

Several different times there have been "Polio" scares, when schools were sometimes closed for a few weeks.

In April of 1956 the Wetoka Health Unit first opened its doors in Wetaskiwin. Since that time pre-school children have been taken to the office for regular check-ups and immunization, and a full time physician, Dr. S. P. Casey, and nurses visit all the school to give the children check-ups and immunization and vaccinations.

The hospital for this community is the Wetaskiwin Community Hospital.



Wetaskiwin's first hospital

# District Schools

## ANGUS RIDGE SCHOOL

By the year of 1902 the district residents felt a need for a school in their own community. Mr. Wm. Thirsk readily donated one acre of land on which to build a school. This was the very north-east corner of his quarter (N.E. 8-45-23-W4) which seemed to be the most central location as far as the district was concerned. Though he gave the land for the purpose of the school



Angus Ridge School built in 1903.

The 1907 class is shown here

it was never sold to the district and over the years the Thirsk continued to pay taxes on the school grounds. The neighbors quickly formed work bees and under the guidance of a head carpenter, a Mr. McAlister from the Louis-ville district, had it ready for classes by the fall of 1903.

Double desks were installed which sat two and these were in use until the last years of the 1930's or early 1940's when single seats were installed. There was no basement under the school and heating was done by a large furnace-

like stove set in one corner. This stove often roasted the pupils who were sitting near by and at the same time those in the opposite corner might be cold. Children were called to class by a hand bell that sat, when not in use, on the teacher's desk.

During the first year there were thirty-one pupils registered, the names of which are as follows: four Knight children; Bill, Rose, Martha and Hattie Jankowski; Otto, Hugo, Lavina Nieman; Clara Tost; Ward, Lillian and Gladys Bailey; Wilfred, Edith and Jessie Waterston; Elsie Gierling; Maggie Thirsk; Fred and Tina Wilson; three Russell children; two Tom Waterston children; Frank Stockdale; Allan Hogg; Frank Sinclair and Austin Rix.

The teacher for that first year was a Miss Graham, originally from Ireland, who taught for the sum of \$650. (Exact salary not known). She boarded with Mr. and Mrs. Wm. Thirsk as did all the teachers up until 1917. After that year the job of boarding the teachers was divided between the Thirsk and Mrs. Ed Wilson, who had moved into the district. Mrs. Wilson states that she boarded the teachers for \$1.00 a day while they were there and some for \$20 a month.

The first trustees for this new school were John F. Nieman, Wm. Thirsk and J. W. Bailey. The money for the teacher's salary and operation and equipment in the school came from the taxes, at that time payable to the treasurer of the school board. There were also money raising schemes within the district such as basket socials, card parties, etc. The taxes in 1903 averaged \$8.00 a quarter and then a good deal of that was paid off by the farmers doing road work, maintenance and repairs. This is a far cry from the average of \$130 a quarter paid in 1958 for school taxes.

The school became a community centre and was the focal point for social affairs in the district. Christmas concerts became a highlight of the year, along with the last day of school picnic when men, women and children

came to enter into the races and games, visit and partake of the wonderful lunch that was served. The school was used for these social events until the Angus Ridge Community Hall was built beside it in 1926.

Natural tree growth remained standing around the school yard and in 1927 or 1928 spruce and pine trees were planted on the North and East side of the yard. These are still standing, beautiful trees that are silent reminders of days gone by.

Many children received their public education in the school and grades up to and including grade 10 were even taught here. One student, Lloyd Wilson, won the Governor General's gold medal in 1926, for receiving the highest marks in the Wetaskiwin district when passing from Grade 8. Some of the children from this school went on in such fields of study as teaching, nursing, engineering, agriculture.

In 1930, '31 and '32 School Fairs were organized in the district with the Fair being held in the old skating rink in Wetaskiwin School. Work was exhibited, along with livestock that the school children had fitted. For two of those years the Angus Ridge School received the highest number of points in the fair and for this won two cups presented by the Canadian Bank of Commerce.

In 1939 the school districts lost the self governing of their schools with the establishment of a school division and a central board of trustees. Angus Ridge school remained open until June of 1948. The teacher for that last year was Lois Jackson who received a salary of \$1350. With the closing of the Angus Ridge school the children from the district were taken by bus, driven by Jack Heller, to the Bears Hill School. This continued from September 1, 1948 until June of 1952. The following fall they were taken to the Battle River School until December and after Christmas were taken to the newly finished Rose Brier centralized school where they continued going until June, 1953. The next fall they were shifted to the Camp Centre Centralized School in Wetaskiwin where they went until June of 1957. In the fall a new centralized school "Clear Vista" was opened in Wetaskiwin and it is to this school that the Angus Ridge children now go.

The old original school was sold in 1951 to Fred Runte and was moved immediately to his farm where it is now used as a chicken house.

Our dear old school painted white  
Was moved away almost overnight —  
And there was nothing where it stood,  
Only the trees to whisper, if they could

Of happy days gone by,  
When as children, you and I,  
Sweet innocence walked hand in hand,  
And played with marbles in the sand.

Those happy days gone by  
We can't forget, no matter how we try.  
So let's just remember, if we can,  
To do some good to our fellow man.

#### CHERRY GROVE SCHOOL — 562

On July 15, 1900 the first school meeting of the Cherry Grove School District was held. This was for the purpose of electing trustees and at that time the following were elected to office; Amos Doupe, A. E. Davis and C. H. Swanson.

On November 1, the trustees met again to decide on a school house "to be 22 feet wide, by 34 feet long by 10 feet high." Two acres of land were to be purchased from the Hudson Bay Company for the school site and playground, to cost \$15. The land was the South West corner of the N.W. 26-45-23-W4th.

The building of the school house was to be let by tender. Rueben Switzer contracted the job for \$147. Ernest Switzer, Amos Doupe and Reuben Switzer built the school under Reuben's guidance in 1901. The school was first built on wooden blocks, but a cement foundation was added in 1907.

The first choice of name was Aberdeen but the name was already taken by a school in Saskatchewan. They named it "Cherry Grove" because of

the abundance of chokecherries nearby and because the Amos Doupe's came from a Cherry Grove district in Ontario.

School had been held in the church before the school opened with the teacher Miss Scott. The first teacher got \$40.00 a month. The new school opened in January 1901 with Kate McMurdo as teacher. She later married Rueben Switzer.

In 1902 Mr. Galloway became teacher and his term was finished out by Mrs. Jemina Myers. In 1903 Miss E. M. McWinney was appointed teacher and in the Fall of that year Mr. H. A. Gibson, now a doctor in Calgary, took over the school. Dr. Gibson, then studying to be a doctor, had a chance to put his studies into practice. School was closed when Dr. Gibson was called to attend the birth of Harold Switzer, when the local doctor was unable to get there.

The first daily registered we have is that of the year 1903. By it we notice that there was an average attendance of 23 pupils. This fairly large attendance was due to the fact that several of the Reimer and Carpenter children attended from over the River. Three of the Abbots, Four Berg children, three from Doupes and two from Meyers all helped swell the list. By this register we see that on May 19, 1903 a heavy snow storm kept nearly all the students away.

The years 1904-1905 saw many different changes of teachers at Cherry Grove. Messrs James Breckenridge, Pye, J. Baker, S. L. Dever and Misses Nichol and L. L. Clase were all there for short periods of time during these two years.

From the records shown in the daily register we trace the names of many of the families whose children attended. Among these are the Switzers, Doupes, Waterstons, Andersons, Pearson, McLaughlin, Carpenter, Wallace, Berg, Recknagle and McRae.

Among the inspectors who attended at Cherry Grove were P. H. Thi-baudau J. Ross, M. O. Nelson, J. Scoffield, L. Yule and in the years 1910 and 1911 Dr. G. Fred McNally.

On July 15, 1900 the first school meeting of the Cherry Grove School District was held. This was for the purpose of electing trustees and at that time the following were elected to office; Amos Doupe, A. E. Davis and C. H. Swanson.

Many notations of stormy weather, blizzards, blocked and muddy roads, rain storms and illness told the story of the difficulties encountered in getting to school. Even the arrival of the Circus in Wetaskiwin left an empty column on the records.

Conventions were held at Strathcona in the early days. School was held for eleven months, including the month of August in those first years.

Many feet had trod up the road to the original "Schoolhouse" and in



Old dobbie and the shay took pupils to Cherry Grove school.



Off to school on the family horse.



1944 a new school was built. However a few years later "Cherry Grove" was included in the large division and the children were transported to Wetaskiwin by bus.

Cherry Grove school now stands empty but the original school and its memories linger in the minds and hearts of those who attended there and those who taught there throughout the many years.

Following is a list of the names of teachers who had taught at Cherry Grove. It is regrettable that records were not found for the years between 1915 and 1935.

1907 — F. J. Chase; Virginia Maude Kerslaye; J. Breckenridge, A. C. Johnson.

1910 — Vera E. Smith; J. Breckenridge; Flora A. Bowie; Sadie S. Haughn; Blanche Harper.

1911 — Mary McEachern; Mabel K. Cooke; Leila McNevin; Lizzie Bjorkgren.

1912 — Leila McNevin; Edna McWinney.

1914 — Leila McNevin; Lillian M. Hubbard.

1915 — Mona Grant; Daisy E. Cornell.

1935 - 36 — V. E. Anderson.

1936 - 41 — Miss E. Sharlow.

1941 - 44 — Beryl M. Gilchrist.

1944 - 45 — Ada M. Helmer.

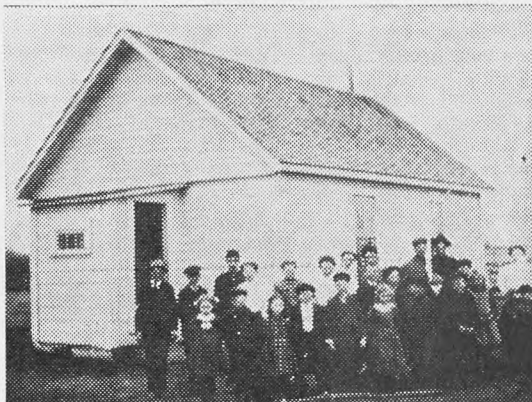
1946 - 47 — June Swanson; Harold Sharlow; Dorothy Fraser.

1947 - 48 — Vivian R. Croft.

1948 - 49 — Lois Jackson.

### THE BEARS HILL SCHOOL

On the thirteenth day of March, 1895 a chairman and two trustees were elected for the new school district of Bears Hill. Mr. John J. Rix was elected chairman and as his trustees, Mr. C. C. Reid and Mr. A. A. Sigalit. On this same day a bylaw was issued for the purchase of a school site and the building of a school for children of the district. In April, 1895 the "Council of Public Instruction", in Regina approved the selection of the ratepayers for a school site to be N.W.  $\frac{1}{4}$  of section 12-45-24 West 4 of the North - West Territories. The school site is exactly six miles south of the Wetaskiwin Court House. A brass seal bearing the inscription "The Bear's Hill Public School District No. 352 of the North West Territories" was purchased and used on all official school documents.



Bears Hill school built in 1904

The school taxes at this early date were levied and paid to the Secretary-Treasurer. In the first year the tax rate was three mills per taxable dollar. The area covered by the Bears Hill District was 12,800 acres. Eventually this area was reduced as some of the children to the east and north were unable to attend during the cold winter months because the distance was too great.

The first school building was erected on one acre of land. It was built of logs and the outside measurements were 24 feet by 18 feet. Voluntary labor from the men of the district soon had the logs drawn and the school erected. The school had a small porch on the front and when it rained puddles stood in front of the door.

The walls were chinked with sod and at times the sod came away from the logs making it chilly and drafty for the children in the cold weather. The seats were constructed of heavy planking and of course were hand made.

Four or five children seated at one desk was not unusual. The blackboard was made of wood too and plated every once in a while with slate. Water was carried by buckets and cups were used for drinking. The school was generally clean with the children providing some of the janitor work. In the early days, school was held only during the warmer months starting from December and from April to August.

Twenty pupils were enrolled for the first term at Bears Hill and the teacher was Miss Belle Durrand, who taught from September 1897 to December, 1897. The teachers in those early days received \$35 per month and usually roomed and boarded with families living close to the school. Among the first children attending were the families of Rixes, Schmulands' Neslunds, Utas', Jensens' Rotviks', Sigalits', Solberg's and Malmos'. Many of these names are familiar to us now and some have grandchildren attending our district school today.

In 1906 new factory seats were added as it was felt that the school, being one of the first in the North-West Territories, should try to keep up with the newer districts. An organ was added and also a library was started with sixteen books. Around the early 1900's a flagpole was erected and trees were planted, giving a pleasant appearance to the grounds.

By 1908 and 1909 it was felt the school was inadequate for the needs of the children and plans got under way for the construction of a new school. In 1910 Mr. Henry Nelson's tender of \$1,585.00 was accepted by the ratepayers of the school district and construction got under way. On January 15, 1911 the school was completed. The size of the building was 24 feet by 36 feet and on a cement foundation. It faced the west but later was moved to face the north and that is how it stands at the present time. It had an entry with a bell tower containing a bell (which is still there) weighing 200 pounds and is 22 inches in diameter. A name plate of wood was also placed above the entry with the name and number of the school in plain view for everyone to see. This plate is still there, a little weather beaten but still readable.

The inside had two cloakrooms and the main room was tastefully painted in pale green, giving a soft light and an agreeable atmosphere in which to work. The water was carried from across the road and the fuel supplies were kept in the basement, as they had a furnace to keep the building at a comfortable heat during the cold weather. A stable was erected on the property for accommodating the horses that were ridden to school by the pupils.

Most holidays were observed such as the King's Birthday, Ash Wednesday, Easter Holidays, Christmas holidays and the like. From October, 1918 to January 1919, Spanish Influenza forced the closing of the school and at various times throughout the ensuing years the school was closed for various reasons, such as measles, stormy weather, the passing of a prominent district resident, music festivals and track meets.

Over the years the teachers sometimes took over the janitor duties. A thorough cleaning was usually done by some person or persons of the district during the holiday season. The school was used as a poll for voting, for holding Christmas Concerts and for the annual year's end school picnic. The school had many and varied teachers, men, women some from Alberta and some from Eastern Canada.

During the late 1930's an extra acre of land was added to the school site making a total of two acres. A piano was traded for the organ. Around the end of the second war, circulating library boxes were started and moved from school to school in the district, at a rate of one box twice a year. At about this time, too, the teacher selected, each year, \$10.00 worth of books which were purchased and used as a basic library.

Early in the 1940's health services were started for the children and most district pupils received their immunization shots from Dr. Stevenson.

Because of the shortage of teachers, the school division board felt that the district children would have to be transported to the Camp Centre school in Wetaskiwin, so in 1950 Bears Hill School was boarded up and remains so to this day, abandoned among the long grass, with its memories of past years.

## THE BATTLE RIVER SCHOOL DISTRICT 287

Early in 1893 the settlers of the Battle River District decided that they must build a school to education their children. They approached the Department of Education and a district was formed with the Battle River



**The original Battle River school  
built in 1894.**

forming the southern and eastern boundaries. The Angus Ridge road was the Western boundary and the Carpenter Bridge road the northern. The contractors, Mr. Robert Angus and Mr. Reed, were paid \$500 and this included the furnishing of desks, which were of rough lumber. The lumber for this building was shipped by rail to Wetaskiwin and hauled by team and wagon from there to the district.

The first teacher, Mrs. Bowen, whose salary was about \$450, boarded at the home of Robert Angus. The

two following teachers, Miss Gallagher and Mr. John McVicker, boarded at the Charles Nelles home, as did many of those who followed.

In those early days the enrollment would sometimes reach as high as 36, but of these many were half-breeds who attended only part time as they moved about a great deal.

Among those who attended the first classes and who still live in the community are Edward Dowswell, Edward Wilson and Thomas Angus.

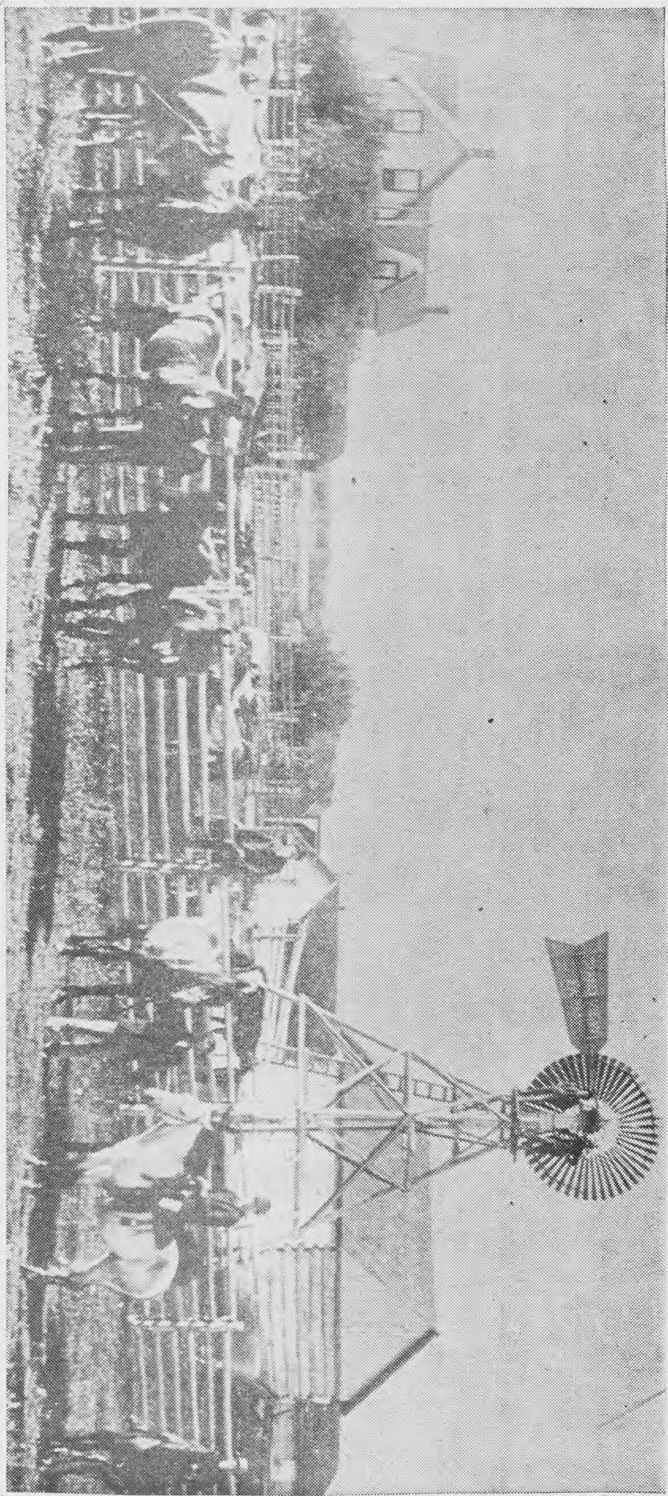
Others who attended during those early times were William, Christian, George and Walter Schantz; William, Fred and Tena Wilson; Bert and Jennie McCrae; the Potvin children; three of the Wallace children who lived on the Hay farm; four Halvorsens who lived by the river; the children of Johnson Tihorsk; Adelaide Vaughn (the late Mrs. H. J. Montgomery) who lived across the river; and William Angus, son of Robert Angus.

The first trustees of the Battle River school were John Dowswell, Christian Schantz Sr. and Robert Angus.

This same building was used as a school house until 1940. It now stands on the farm of Wilfred Schantz, grandson of Christian Schantz Sr., and is used as a pig barn. This school served the entire community until 1903 when another district, Angus Ridge was formed to the west.

In 1940, school was held in a new stucco building and continued until the end of 1947 when the nine pupils attending were transferred to Angus Ridge.

From 1948 until 1952 the four pupils were taken to the Cherry Grove school. At this time a centralized school was being built at Rosebrier and the following year the pupils from Battle River and part of Angus Ridge were taken by bus to the new school.



The J. J. Rix Grandview Farm in 1903. Note the two men on the windmill



## ANGUS RIDGE COMMUNITY HALL

For years the school houses had been used for all the community activities, such as socials dances or meetings. In 1926 the residents of Angus Ridge and other nearby districts decided that a hall was needed, as their school buildings were not the proper places for such events. The school was in a state of confusion for a day or so after it had been used, so it was decided and a piece of land was purchased from William Thirsk and shares in the project were sold for \$10.00 per share.

A dance was held during the summer in the hay loft of Lou Felland's new barn and the proceeds of \$98.00 was donated towards the building of the hall.

Cecil Murphy dug the basement for \$75.00 and Charlie Sandahl was hired to do the building. He mixed all the cement for the basement by hand, using only a shovel, his pay for same being around four hundred and seventy-five dollars. Besides this, there were a number of bills at the United Farmers Association Store. There was a furnace at the United Farmers for \$178.90; a cook stove for \$28.00 and a heater at \$20. A piano was purchased from A. J. Rix for \$182.50. There were cups and plates, etc. to purchase. Some kitchen utensils were donated by individuals and the Women's Institute and the Missionary Society gave three dozen teaspoons. Coal was always an item, as it took a lot of heat to make the hall comfortable. Gas lanterns were bought, the first three cost \$23.25. Later a light plant was installed. Ten tables were built by Roy Ballhorn and Carl Krutzfeldt. A loan of several hundred dollars was borrowed from the Imperial Bank.

The first dance was held in the hall on November 26th with a big attendance, taking in \$258.00. Lunch was served by the ladies of the community. The music was the Pep Orchestra at a price of \$27.50. Two more dances were held that year.

The first directors meeting was held in the office of Odell and Russell. It was reported that the company had been duly registered on the 3rd day of January, 1927 and produced the certificate of Incorporation, signed by the Registrar of Joint Stock Companies. A seal was obtained for future use. There were present, George Waterson, Tom Angus and Roy Ballhorn. Cost of the registration, etc. was \$94.89. The first officers were George Waterson, President; C. Krutzfeldt, Vice-President; Roy Ballhorn, Secretary-Treasurer and Directors, E. B. Switzer, C. R. Shantz, T. A. Angus, Frank Ballhorn and L. Evans.

B. McRAE, Charlie Nelles, Frances McKenna, Otto Neiman and Ed Wilson were faithful workers and acted as directors for many years.

About 20 dances were held in 1927 all reporting a profit. Some of the Orchestras playing for the dances through the years, were Pep Orchestra, Wetaskiwin Twinklers, Ponoka Orchestra, Rocky Mountain Rangers, Asker Orchestra, Mrs. Macs' Orchestra, Ken Moores, Camrose Blue Birds and others.

The lunch committee consisted of two directors and their wives for each dance and during the first year or so they would often make up some 20 loaves of bread and each woman would bring four or five cakes. They also did the serving and dish washing. Later they were paid for cakes and doing the dishes. Two directors took charge at the door. Many social affairs have been held there besides dances. The Wetaskiwin Board of Trade, the Kiwanians and the Fish and Game Association have been entertained to banquets. Plays have been put on by the Angus Ridge, Lone Ridge, Millet, Water Glen, Wetaskiwin Dramatic Society and others. Many card parties and bingo have been held there. Social evenings and Christmas concerts have been greatly enjoyed. Private wedding anniversaries and birthday celebrations and meetings of all kinds have taken place there. The Angus Ridge Women's Institute hold their annual bazaar there and interesting and varied have their decorations been.

One annual meeting which was held in January the old timers will not

forget. It was thirty-five below zero but a good crowd gathered—coming in bob sleighs—women wrapped in fur robes, men wearing great fur coats, some came in cutters if they had such vehicle. The horses were tied up in the school barn. After the meeting those present enjoyed a game of cards, five hundred or whist. Later a hearty lunch of hot coffee, sandwiches and cake was served. No one seemed to mind too cold.

Another evening I remember in February a large crowd had gathered at a dance, although there was a lot of snow the road had been good but about midnight a strong wind came up and a blizzard developed, and it did not take long before the roads were filled solid with snow. A lot of shovelling had to be done but some of the cars were stalled until morning. Anyone living along the road had their houses filled to capacity with stranded revelers.

Another time at a dance, two lovely cakes were stolen, the thief probably entering through a broken basement window. The dancers had to do with less cake and it is hoped whoever took them did not overeat.

In 1914 it was decided to install an electric light plant. It was purchased from Bruce Robinson, Edmonton for three hundred and forty-two dollars. With this plant the hall enjoyed better lighting and found it more convenient in every way. However, the directors spent many an hour getting the engine to run in cold weather and throughout the years many repairs were bought for it and many hours of labor were spent keeping the plant in working order.

One year our community won the Canadian National Railways Competition for the most up-to-date community. For this event we put on a supper in the hall with a program following. At this occasion we also had an exhibit of handicraft from the district.

1929 material was purchased to finish the inside of the hall and Mr. P. Nelson did the work for \$75.00.

We also paid as high as \$46.00 for Harvey's orchestra from Edmonton and still broke even.

The basement stair had to be made wider, also another exit was made compulsory, so a door was put in on the west side with a platform and an outside stair. Insurance had to be kept up. Brush had to be cleared around the hall to make parking area. Roads also often had to be opened before a dance.

Then in 1951 the Roy Ballhorn Family gave a donation of \$150.00 to the hall and suggested that the Calgary Power electricity be installed. So the late Ralph Angus, who was then Secretary, approached the directors and forthwith they proceeded to make arrangements for rewiring the hall. The cost of installing the electricity was \$493.00 and the Angus Ridge Women's Institute canvassed the district for donations and collected \$296.00 and also gave a cheque for \$27.00 to make up the balance to cover the cost. When the Battle River School was closed the community sold the piano which had been in the school and turned the money over to the hall.

At the annual meeting in December 1947, Roy Ballhorn who acted as Secretary Treasurer for eleven years, Vice-President for several and President for seven refused to act any longer. Likewise Mr. Tom Angus who had acted as Vice-President and director throughout the years would no longer act. All the other directors who had been faithful in their duties wished to retire, so a new slate of officers were elected, namely: Zene Cleland, President; Lloyd Shantz, Vice-President; and Ralph Angus, Secretary-Treasurer. The Directors were Mac Shantz, Donald Angus, Lester Beller, Stan Thirsk, V. Rix, Ken Malmas and Bill Nelles.

During the first years, Roy Ballhorn, Ed. Wilson, Clifford Waterson and O. Neiman served as Secretaries and I want to pay tribute to George Waterson, who was the first President for the hall and held this office for years. His accidental and untimely death was felt very keenly by the community.

Under the new regime of officers, the hall has been repainted, curtains were put up at the windows, the basement wall reinforced, a chimney put up through the back of the hall and a floor register installed. A square dance club was organized and the hall did very well with the square dances held there. Several other improvements were made recently.

## WAR RECORD

It is a very difficult and sad task to write anything on this subject, something that will do justice and help us to realize, what those brave men who enlisted sacrificed, that we might enjoy the freedom of our democracy.

It has been hard to obtain all the information we would like, concerning the first world war of 1914 - 1918 and the second world war of 1939 - 45. In fact we may have made a mistake in our list of names covering both wars but the records are very meager and confusing. But we do know, that our districts, Bears Hill, Angus Ridge, Battle River and Cherry Grove did contribute their share in the war effort.

Following are the names of veterans who served in the World Wars.

### HONOR ROLL 1939 - 1945

MISS MYRTLE DAHMS  
MISS BETTY HAY  
BAILEY, MAYNARD  
CHERRINGTON, ROBERT  
DAHMS, LEONARD  
DAHMS, LLOYD  
ELIASON, GORDON  
ENGBLOOM, GUSTAVE  
ERICKSON, RALPH  
EVANS, CHARLIE  
EVANS, DON  
EVANS, HUGH  
GIRLING, BERT  
HAY, HENRY  
HAY, LOUIE  
HAY, RAYMOND  
JENSEN, CARL  
NELLES, BOYD  
NELLES, GERALD  
REEVES, ERNEST  
REID, ALFRED  
REID, BOBBY

REID, CHARLES  
RICHARDS, ALLAN  
RICHARDSON, GEORGE  
RIX, DON  
RIX, HAROLD  
RIX, NORMAN  
SCHELL, NORMAN  
SCHMULAND, KENNETH  
SHANTZ, IRA  
SWANSON, RALPH  
THIRSK, ELDON  
WATERSTON, CLIFFORD  
WATERSTON, WILFRED  
WOLTERS, LEONARD  
WOLTERS, OTTO  
WOLTERS, RAY  
WOODROW, ART  
YORK, EDDIE  
YORK, HARRY  
WHITE, JACK  
WHITE, NORMAN



Wetaskiwin's Cenotaph designed by Bob Angus Jr. and built about 1952

### HONOR ROLL 1914 - 1918

ANDERSON, ELMER  
ANGUS, H. G.  
ANGUS, W. G.  
BELSHEIM, T.  
BLAND, PERCY  
BOLTON, ART

DOUPE, PERCY  
EVANS, LEVI  
GIRLING, ERNEST  
MALMAS, JOHN  
THIRSK, GORDON  
WILSON, FRED



# Community War Efforts

When the Angus Ridge W.I. was organized in 1917, the members commenced doing war work at once. Knitting, sewing and donations of various kinds were sent to the Red Cross as well as to service men overseas.

The organized United Farm Women, also did their share of sewing, quilt making and various other donations. The Battle River Women's Missionary Society was active in war work during both wars.

During the Second World War, the women of the district were extremely busy, donating to the various war efforts. The records show that in 1942 the W.I. made nine quilts, ditty bags were forwarded to service men, socks, mitts and garments were handed in to be distributed.

They have been very active in all sorts of Red Cross work. Donations of blood have been given freely by several residents of the district.

"Winning the War Campaign" was started in the community in January of 1942 — This was the salvaging of scraps, metal, paper and rags. A Jam for Britain fund was instigated and those who were able donated a small amount of money to this cause.

In 1943 53 articles were made by the Angus Ridge Women's Institute. Then again records show that in 1944, 124 articles were donated and sent to needy causes.

War stamps were sold, not only among members of the different organizations but each school took on this worthy project and so, the pupils did their share. The school children were also active in Junior Red Cross activities.

Since the war, the church groups and other organizations are still doing their share in Red Cross work, overseas, as well as at home, sending "Care" parcels, diapers and soaps to Greece and Arabia, used clothing and layettes to the needy in many a needy country.



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The Old Trading Post, by Mrs. Roy Ballhorn.  
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The District Schools  
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Cherry Grove School, by Mrs. G. Ballhorn.  
Battle River School, by Mrs. Wm. Nelles.  
Bears Hill School, by Mrs. E. Runte.  
The Angus Ridge Community Hall, by Mrs. Roy Ballhorn.  
Bears Hill Coal Mine, material submitted by Mrs. C. Rix.  
Industries, by Mrs. Roy Ballhorn.  
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## Conclusion

Whenever the corner stone of a new building is laid, it is the custom to put therein something of value, such as a Bible, a coin or newspaper. When this structure falls in ruins, the later generations, finding these, may learn something concerning the faith and hopes and experiences and deeds of their predecessors. So may it be with these pages, and may they reflect the lives and deeds of the brave men and women who pioneered in this district. They lacked so much, yet they cheerfully shouldered the task of making a community of homes out of a wilderness.

May we always honor and respect our pioneers and never allow ourselves to forget.





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